United Nations S/PV.4764

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4764th meeting

Friday, 30 May 2003, 10.25 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-37644 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2003/578, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the Council's attention to the following amendments to the draft resolution.

In paragraph 5, the words "and human rights law" should be deleted. Accordingly, the paragraph should read as follows:

> "Demands that all the parties to the conflict in Ituri and in particular in Bunia cease hostilities immediately and reiterates that international humanitarian law must be respected, and that there will be no impunity for violators."

In paragraph 7, the words "respect human rights" should be added after the words "the Great Lakes region". The paragraph should therefore begin as follows.

> "Demands that all Congolese parties and all States in the Great Lakes region respect human rights, cooperate with the Interim Emergency Multinational Force and with MONUC ...".

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution, as orally amended, before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution, as orally amended.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

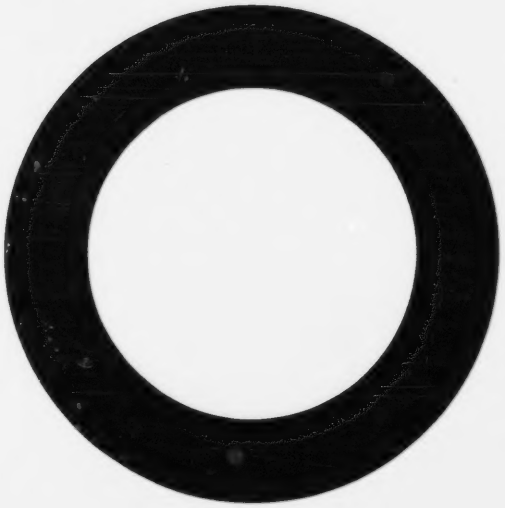
Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution, as orally amended, has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1484 (2003).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.



United Nations S/PV.4765

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4765th meeting

Friday, 30 May 2003, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation concerning Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2003/565).

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03-37650 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2003/565)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara, document S/2003/565.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2003/577, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1485 (2003).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4766

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4766th meeting

Friday, 30 May 2003, 10.35 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Atieh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security.

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03-37656 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and with the consent of the Council, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend invitations to the representatives of Brazil, Burundi, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Greece, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay to participate in the meeting without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

It is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mota Sardenberg (Brazil), Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi), Mr. Ikouebe (Congo), Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Daratzikis (Greece), Mr. Haraguchi (Japan), Mr. Rastam (Malaysia), Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius), Mr. Baja (Philippines), Mr. Kamanzi (Rwanda), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Hachami (Tunisia), Mrs. Mulamula (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Gambari to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

As we all know, the Council has on its current agenda a host of African issues which include the current zones of conflict in Central and West Africa. In a matter of days, Security Council missions will be departing for those two subregions. They will take a powerful message that the Council remains focused on these issues and is actively engaged. Today, we will have a full discussion on how those missions can promote the Security Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Another major objective of this debate will be to analyse the conflicts and complex crises that plague Africa with a view to discussing ways and means and possible mechanisms within the United Nations system to promote durable solutions and peace and stability in the continent. With the participation of Council and non-Council members in the discussion, we anticipate a rich debate and a productive outcome.

I shall now give the floor to Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

Mr. Gambari: Thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to address members of the Council on the them of this wrap-up meeting: "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security".

Security Council missions to Africa are a clear demonstration of continuing interest in and engagement with crises and conflicts on the continent. Beyond that, however, they need to be effective instruments for conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution. In this regard, the selection of mission locations, the timing of the missions and what they accomplish on the ground as well as at Headquarters become the most critical questions that need to be addressed at this meeting of the Council and in the future.

Therefore, as the Council embarks on its forthcoming missions to Central and West Africa, there is a need to apply the lessons learnt from previous experiences and also to explore further linkages between peace and security, on the one hand, and social and economic development, on the other. This short

presentation will highlight a few areas in which I believe the Council may wish to consider further efforts, and it will conclude with some recommendations on the way forward.

As to applying the lessons learnt, first, the Council would be well served by considering using multidisciplinary United Nations expert support prior to and after despatching its fact-finding missions to potential or actual conflict areas in Africa. This would promote a more efficient use of Council missions' time while on the ground and also facilitate effective follow-up actions. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations recently led a multidisciplinary mission to Côte d'Ivoire and a similar one is planned for the Central African Republic, to be led by the Department of Political Affairs. These are examples of an integrated multidisciplinary approach whose benefits may include comprehensive conflict prevention and conflict-management strategies.

Secondly, preventive measures that have the prospects of success must be designed and implemented through active collaboration with and support from subregional and regional organizations.

Thirdly, in general, conflicts in Africa cannot be resolved without taking their regional and global dimensions fully into account.

Fourthly, it should be recognized that the international community has not yet been particularly successful in post-conflict peace-building in Africa and, perhaps, elsewhere and that more concerted efforts need to be made in these areas. In this regard, the failure of the international community to engage in serious efforts to consolidate peace in the Central African Republic, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau after the end of the earlier international peacekeeping operations in those countries can largely be attributed to the relapse into conflict there. Therefore, greater and more creative efforts by the international community in a concerted and comprehensive manner, involving not only the United Nations, but also the Bretton Woods institutions and donor countries, are essential for successful peace-building.

I shall now address some pressing issues demanding urgent consideration.

The Security Council missions to both Central Africa and West Africa are particularly timely because they will provide the Council with an opportunity to learn first hand and thus make informed judgements on a host of issues. In Central Africa, for example, we would urge the Council, first, to evaluate the current mandate and resources of the various United Nations peace operations for much-needed adjustment, especially the missions in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and secondly, to revisit the possibility of holding an international conference on the Great Lakes region to discuss the future of the region, as the idea of the conference gained momentum recently as progress was made in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi peace processes.

Moreover, the mission to West Africa provides a unique opportunity for the Council to assess the capacity of regional organizations to participate in peace operations and, in particular, to assess how the international community might assist the capacity of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States in general and their deployment to Burundi and Côte d'Ivoire respectively; to evaluate progress made in accomplishing the benchmarks that should guide the pace of the drawdown of the personnel of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL); to assess the vulnerability of Sierra Leone to security threats after the withdrawal of UNAMSIL and, in this connection, to evaluate the capacity of Sierra Leone's security sector to respond to any internal and external threats; to explore with the Sierra Leone Government and development agencies what effective peace-building measures need to be enhanced as UNAMSIL draws down its troops; to ascertain how the international community might best seize the opportunity of the forthcoming elections to facilitate an end to the conflict in Liberia and evaluate the type of engagement that could result in creating conditions conducive to credible nationwide elections in Liberia; to assess the current degree of engagement in Côte d'Ivoire to promote the effective implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement up to the 2005 elections.

My recommendations are as follows. Upon the return of the mission to Headquarters, the Council may wish to consider the following topics for thematic discussions in order to promote greater coherence of action by the system as a whole: the rule of law and the promotion of internal security and human rights; minimum conditions for holding credible elections; security sector reform; measures to enhance transparency and accountability in the management of

State wealth and resources; strengthening State authority through the civil service and legislatures; and enhancing the capacity of regional organizations to undertake peace operations.

Secondly, while visiting actual or potential conflict areas, the Security Council should develop sustainable contacts with major stakeholders or parties on the ground. That will, inter alia, facilitate the transmission, reception and consideration of the various resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the Council and directed at those actors.

Finally, when the missions return, the Security Council may also wish to consider measures to foster greater coordination and coherence in the United Nations response at the intergovernmental level to the interrelated issues of peace, security and development in Africa. To move that process forward, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council may wish to consider holding joint meetings periodically as a way of mobilizing international support for Africa in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, for which the Security Council has a mandate, and of post-conflict economic rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, for which the Economic and Social Council has a unique responsibility.

In conclusion, let me say that the Secretariat stands ready to assist the Council in the further elaboration and subsequent implementation of proposals that might emanate from today's discussion and subsequent ones aimed at promoting peace and security in Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of France, who will lead the Security Council mission to Central Africa.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): In the context of the Security Council mission that will visit Central Africa from 9 to 16 June, I should like to refer to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi.

Several years ago, the Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced a situation of conflicts that we are told, caused some 3 million deaths. The Security Council immediately took up those conflicts, which involved practically all of the countries of Central and Southern Africa in one way or another. In close liaison with the Secretary-General, the Council worked with the parties signatory to the Lusaka Agreement, the founding Agreement of the peace process concluded in 1999 and aimed at establishing the peace process and moving it forward. The Council's efforts were complemented by those of other international institutions such as the Bretton Woods institutions, which have become major actors in restoring peace in the Great Lakes region.

But we must recognize that the international community's efforts to restore peace to the Congo have sometimes been frustrated. To the extent that provisions were put in place to end the conflicts, the conflicts seemed to adapt themselves and to resume in a different form, a bit like a bacterium developing resistance to medicines that are used against it. Thus, we saw the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo transform. From a regional conflict motivated by security concerns, it changed into an even more complex, multifaceted crisis with other dimensions: a domestic Congolese dimension; regional economic stakes; and local conflicts in a situation of total anarchy and human tragedy.

The complexity and the sometimes difficult-to-understand nature of those conflicts are obviously not a reason to give up, first of all because the human cost would be alarming, but also because the peace process that we are supporting is beginning to bear fruit. There has been considerable movement towards the withdrawal of foreign forces. A political transition agreement has been signed among the Congolese. We have begun to disarm foreign armed groups. That is certainly not enough, because the withdrawal is not complete, because the transition must truly be launched and because the repeated rebel offensives in the east are sabotaging the attempts to disarm the armed groups. It is also not enough because progress at the political level is still far from becoming real progress in the life of the Congolese; massacres continue and instability remains. However, we must build on that progress so that the advances in the peace process are consolidated and peace returns.

So what can we do today? The first thing we can do is to make clear to all the parties to the conflict in the region and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that it is their peace process. No one can make peace for them. We can help them, but the restoration of peace is their primary responsibility. Moreover, it is in their interest. Perhaps some of the parties continue to think they can gain some immediate advantage by playing the military card either directly or by proxy,

but, beyond the very short term, everyone has an interest in a negotiated political settlement in which the legitimate concerns of all are taken into account. The parties to the conflict have adhered to that logic by signing the Lusaka, Kampala and Pretoria Agreements and others, but now those agreements must be fully respected and implemented.

It is not enough to explain to and remind the parties of their commitments or, where necessary, to apply political pressure on them to respect those commitments. The Security Council must sometimes undertake more concrete measures to help the parties implement their commitments. That is the raison d'être for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), deployed to facilitate the disengagement of the combatants two years ago, the disarmament and repatriation of armed groups last year and the implementation of the Luanda and Pretoria Agreements after that. Concrete measures should also be undertaken to neutralize the forces driving the conflict. That is the substance of the work accomplished by Ambassador Kassem's Panel of Experts on halting the plundering of the Congo's natural resources. Other concrete measures aim to respond to urgent needs when such measures are necessary: when we need to stop massacres or when a situation becomes intolerable.

That then, is the basis for the Security Council's role: a political message, on the one hand; action on the ground, on the other. We cannot have one without the other. Today, the Council is active in precisely those two areas. We have just adopted resolution 1484 (2003), which authorizes the deployment of a multinational force to Bunia. That force, established at the Secretary-General's request, will have a mandate to stabilize the situation in Bunia and help ensure the security of the civilian population. Headed by France, it will be deployed until 1 September, the time needed to enable the Secretary-General to deploy a strengthened MONUC contingent in that city.

Still, this emergency action cannot suffice. The Council cannot limit itself to authorizing a coalition of countries to send a multinational force to Bunia. The Council must also strengthen the political framework of the peace process — in short, it must give new momentum to the process, which clearly has moved forward, as I said earlier, but which needs to be put back on track. This is precisely the goal of the mission that the Council will be sending to Central Africa in a little over a week, and which I will have the honour of chairing.

The mission will have many messages to convey, in particular to remind the Congolese parties of the imperative need immediately to end military operations. This is indispensable, as a major military operation is being launched in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is also necessary in order definitively to set in motion the process of the disarmament and repatriation of foreign armed groups.

Another message will be to tell all those who support armed groups, whoever they may be — rebels, militias or foreign armed groups — that they must immediately put an end to this type of support and stop being engaged in conflict by proxy, and that they must also prevent such support from being given.

The mission should also explain to the Congolese parties, which, at long last, have reached agreement — due to the personal involvement of President Mbeki with respect to the modalities of the transition — that they must now, without losing any more time, begin that transition. The mission should also remind all the parties that the wealth of the Congo must be used for the benefit of the Congolese people.

In addition to these messages, we also need to consider what potential confidence-building measures we could propose. A good-neighbourly pact has been suggested, which we should consider. There is also the prospect of an international conference for the Great Lakes region, in whose preparations Ibrahima Fall is also involved. On the basis of what our interlocutors will say to us, we will then identify the means available to us to continue to assist the peace process, in particular through MONUC. It is thus in the light of the lessons learned from that mission that we will read the report that the Secretary-General has just provided to us, and which contains proposals on adapting this peace operation's mandate to the latest challenges to the peace process.

I should like also to touch upon the situation in Burundi, where the mission will also go. Indeed, the Council is less involved there than in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, simply because there is no United Nations peacekeeping operation in that country. Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned also by the situation in Burundi, where, for two years now, the Arusha agreement process has been under way. The political transition envisaged in that agreement has

taken place, with the accession on 1 May of the former Vice-President. This is testimony that the process is working and that, more than ever, it must be supported. It must be supported because there are real difficulties facing the process, primarily the absence of a ceasefire. This is a paradoxical situation: a peace process is being established that encompasses more than 20 parties, while the last rebels are continuing to fight. The transition also needs to be supported because the economic situation in the country is extremely difficult. We all are aware that a key condition for the success of a peace process is the provision of economic assistance, which is indispensable to bringing about peace.

In the near term, we must therefore strive to help the Burundians to consolidate the Arusha process, which is already irreversible. To do so, we will need to provide answers to several questions: how to provide our support to the establishment of the African mission; how to induce the last rebels to join the negotiations process; and how we can help the Burundians to fight impunity. The mission, which will spend an entire day in Bujumbura in order to meet all the political players in Burundi and which will also attempt to establish contacts with the last of the rebels, will, I hope, help us to find answers to these difficult questions.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Let me convey my warm thanks to the Pakistan presidency for choosing this subject for the wrap-up session at a very opportune moment, just before the two Council missions to Africa, when we need to reflect on their role as a major instrument of the Council and how they help achieve our wider objectives. I am very grateful to the Special Adviser for his address to us this morning. Liaising with the Secretariat and using the full range of the United Nations expertise on our business is absolutely essential.

Council members will recall that we restarted the practice of Council missions on the ground in 1999, with the dramatic visit made by five of us to Jakarta and East Timor, and our regular travels since then have, I think, enhanced the image of the Council as an operational and not just a remote legislative body.

In my experience over four years of participation, Security Council missions add an extra dimension to the Council's work on peacekeeping, peace-building and conflict resolution. They demonstrate in a graphic way the importance which the Council attaches to particular regions or conflict situations, and they can put the spotlight on crisis situations such as the fighting and the blockage in the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in a way which Governments concerned cannot ignore. They give Council ambassadors the chance to speak frankly and personally to heads of State to explain the Council's objectives more fully than can be done in Council resolutions and to secure the personal commitments from key players which are vital in finding lasting solutions to conflict.

They also bring home to Council members themselves the stark realities of what conflict brings upon the people involved. Council missions bring us face to face with more than just political and military leaders. We have made a point of meeting civil society and non-governmental organization representatives, and sometimes ordinary people on the ground. It is difficult for me to forget a side trip that I made with my colleagues from the Netherlands and Namibia to Kananga, in the dead centre of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We were met by the dignitaries of the town, and, as we drove into this wholly trashed city, out of the damaged buildings all the children of the town poured out, crying out in French, "Paix! Paix! Paix! Paix!" and ran alongside the convoy as we went through. They thought that just our visit to the town, the three of us, was going to bring peace to the central Congo and allow them to restore a city of three quarters of a million people.

We had to recognize also as we left, with the sun going down, to catch the plane before it was dark, that the same children were standing silently at the side of the road, wondering why we were leaving before we had restored a normal life to them and to their families. We have to recognize that we are welcome in these places, but that we create expectations which are visible on the faces of the children as we come and go.

I think, therefore, that all our meetings with people on the ground in these missions have been extremely useful in broadening Council understanding of the impact of conflict and in helping us make the connection between big military and political events and the individuals they affect. We also help to ensure that civil society voices are heard by their own leaders, which is not always the case.

I hope that the Council's mission to West Africa will put those ideals into practice. We know how closely intertwined the conflicts in West Africa have become. The civil war in Sierra Leone was encouraged and exacerbated by President Taylor; Liberians have been fighting in Côte d'Ivoire. All these conflicts have produced a pool of displaced and dispossessed young people who will fight anywhere as long as they are paid. The instability unleashed has returned to roost in no uncertain manner in Liberia itself. It is now clear to us that lasting stability in the subregion depends on sustainable peace in every country of the region.

In Côte d'Ivoire, we shall insist to all players that there is no alternative to Linas-Marcoussis. In Liberia, we aim to build on progress at the peace talks next week in Ghana and to secure President Taylor's personal commitment to a ceasefire and a comprehensive peace plan. Having heard Mr. Gambari this morning, I am very grateful to him for his recommendations for our mission. I think that they accord with our intentions in taking on this task next month.

On the Council's Africa business, it is important for the United Kingdom that we have been able to work closely and will continue to work closely with the Government and the delegation of France. I am pleased that Ambassador De La Sablière is leading the mission to the Great Lakes next month. I hope that he will allow me also to comment on the Great Lakes area.

With that mission, which is about to happen, the Council will have visited the Great Lakes for four successive years. This sustained engagement has led to some real progress in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We often talk about the move from war to post-conflict reconstruction, and we have seen it happen in Sierra Leone. But in Central Africa, the challenge is huge. It needs unremitting effort over a long period to persuade warring parties truly to commit to peace and to leave the military path behind. That requires the parties to take risks, to put national reconstruction ahead of personal and political ambition, to share power and to compete fairly for popular support. Above all, it requires courageous leadership. That is the message that we must get across in our face-to-face meetings with the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours later this month. The Burundi leg of the mission will allow us to demonstrate our support for the second phase of the Transitional Government, the new President and Vice-President and the African Union peacekeeping mission.

Coming back to West Africa, I am glad that we have been able to include Guinea-Bissau in our West Africa mission, on a joint visit with colleagues from the Economic and Social Council. This is more than just a cosmetic demonstration of cooperation between our two Councils. It is essential that in a case such as Guinea-Bissau, where economic and social mismanagement is at the heart of the country's instability, both Councils should be actively engaged in working together for a solution. I am glad to have been part of this enlarged collective process during my time on the Council, and I entirely agree with Ambassador Gambari's recommendations in that respect.

Early on in the West Africa mission, we shall visit Nigeria and Ghana. This reflects the importance we all attach to working closely with the regional structures. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent troops to Côte d'Ivoire to monitor the ceasefire, and they are now helping to implement the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. ECOWAS has appointed a mediator, the former Nigerian President, General Abubakar, to facilitate peace talks between the Government of Liberia and the rebels. The Security Council has to back up those regional initiatives with both political and financial support so that in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia we can deliver a united message that carries maximum weight.

But this sort of cooperation has to be a partnership. Members of the Council can provide resources for regional peacekeeping — for example, as France has done for Côte d'Ivoire — or funds for reintegration and development. France, the United States and the United Kingdom have for some time been developing a peacekeeping training programme for African States. But we are serving a process that must be owned by Africans. The countries concerned have to take responsibility and demand accountability for the implementation of peace agreements and the establishment of effective peacekeeping measures.

We as outsiders can help, but we cannot achieve much without the total commitment of those most directly affected. The way in which the Council conducts its business on Africa must reflect this fundamental requirement of partnership, in full recognition of the political, economic, cultural and financial aspects and sensitivities of every issue. Then,

we may start to consolidate the process of bringing peace and security to Africa, which we all want to see.

The President: I now call on Ambassador Koonjul, the representative of Mauritius, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of May. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Mr. President, you have asked us to speak on behalf of the African Group. But due to the late notification, it has not been possible for us to coordinate the statement that I am going to make. Principally, I will be making a statement in my national capacity, although I am sure that many of the views that I express are shared by my African colleagues.

We are very pleased that the Council is holding a public meeting devoted to Africa after quite some time. It is taking place in this format, a wrap-up session, at a time when two important Security Council missions are going to be travelling to Africa. We wish that we had had a chance to hold such a meeting well ahead of time so that some of the suggestions that we could have made could have been taken on board in the terms of reference.

We very much welcome the decision of the Security Council to undertake these missions. We think that they are extremely useful; they are always very beneficial. They are helpful to the Council members themselves because they give members an opportunity to meet with the political and military leaders, as Sir Jeremy Greenstock has said, as well as to meet with civil society, both individuals and the non-governmental organizations. More importantly, it is an opportunity to impress upon the political leadership and the people in those countries the message of the Security Council.

But we believe that it is also important that the missions come back to New York with some message that the people of those countries have for the Security Council and that action is taken on those requests from the people, who are the most concerned in the matter.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock mentioned that the Security Council is going to have its fourth mission to the Great Lakes. Four missions have taken place in four years. We believe that each mission should build upon the previous one and should make progress on the basis on what has taken place before. Unfortunately, we have not seen that. We have not seen that from the point of view of the Security Council. We believe that any mission organized in the future should try to see what has happened in the past — the failings of past missions and how to improve upon them.

For example, we believe that the mission to the Great Lakes —Burundi, for example — should have something new to it. In Burundi, there has been a peaceful transition. Peace has now more or less been established. We think that that country now deserves to receive greater attention from the Economic and Social Council. Perhaps this would have been a great opportunity for a joint mission between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. That would have sent the signal that, yes, we have now passed the conflict stage; we are in the post-conflict stage, and it is now time for post-conflict peace-building and development. It would also have sent the message that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council are working together to try to establish firmly the grounds for peace. We therefore believe that the terms of reference should be prepared accordingly.

We also believe that in preparing for such missions, especially to Africa, it is extremely important that there be proper coordination and consultation with the African Union. We have felt that this is lacking. We have felt that we can very often be at cross-purposes with the African Union. The African Union is also concerned about the conflicts in Africa, and it has been involved in some of the peacekeeping efforts there. It is important that the Council should try to consult and to coordinate its activities with what the African Union is doing or has been doing. We remember that last year, when the Security Council set up the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, we did a lot of work to try to bring about better coordination between the Security Council and the African Union. It was even proposed that there could be joint missions between the Security Council and officials of the African Union. Of course, that is a long shot, and something that is not going to happen tomorrow. But I think we should start to consider these issues; we should at least start with some better coordination.

We also believe that the missions to both the Great Lakes and Western Africa should consider the desirability of setting up a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)

programme for the whole of the continent. Generally speaking, we believe that quite a bit of progress has been achieved in terms of peace in the continent, but such peace cannot be sustained until, and unless, we address the problem of DDR. That was even recognized last year at the level of the G-8, when in their communiqué the ministers agreed that there could not be sustainable peace unless there were proper DDR. Such a DDR programme must be comprehensive and must enable former combatants to be reintegrated into normal day-to-day life and economic activities. Otherwise, those people will soon be employed elsewhere to continue the work that they are accustomed to doing.

We therefore think that the mission, while in the field and upon its return, should try to look into what more should be done in order that we may make progress in the area of DDR. We recall that many DDR camps have been built — for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — to supposedly receive combatants who were going to disarm themselves. However, very few of them have gone to those camps. In fact, no more than 200 to 300 people have actually gone. Last year when the Security Council visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there was a big show of weapons being destroyed after having been collected through the DDR programme. I do not think that was enough to really address the problem of DDR. The Council will need to address the problem of how we should move from this attitude of voluntary disarmament to one with more incentives given, if not a kind of aggressive disarmament of combatants. Unless we do that, we feel that we will not be able to achieve long-term, sustainable peace.

With regard to the mission to West Africa, the African Group regrets that it was abruptly postponed for other important matters. We have of course been told that Africa is still important, but that other urgent matters had arisen that had to take priority over the mission. We believe that urgency and importance are matters of perception. We believe that what is important to someone also becomes urgent.

We had been concerned that the mission's travel to Guinea-Bissau was in question. I am very pleased with the reassurances given by Sir Jeremy Greenstock that Guinea-Bissau is going to be included in the trip to West Africa. We also feel that it is important that the full mission team be in Guinea-Bissau. Anything less than that would send a very wrong signal. We believe that Guinea-Bissau is at a crossroads. We have said in the past that Guinea-Bissau is at what we would call the post-conflict stage, but it is also at the pre-conflict stage. In the paper circulated by the President, the President wrote about the role of the Security Council in trying to engage in activities geared towards the prevention of conflict. This is precisely one situation in which the Council can be very effective in trying to prevent the possibility of a full-fledged conflict in a country.

We are also pleased to note that some members of the Economic and Social Council will also be travelling to Guinea-Bissau around the same time as the Security Council mission. As we have said, we feel that there should be more joint missions to countries like Guinea-Bissau and Burundi.

In conclusion, I would like to make two brief comments regarding the terms of reference that have been circulated. We agree fully with the terms of reference that have been circulated with regard to Burundi. We think that the Security Council should impress upon that country the need for security and military reform. This is an important aspect of peace there.

With regard to Liberia, we believe that, in addition to what has been indicated in the terms of reference, the Security Council should try to find ways to have some kind of constructive engagement with the authorities in that country. It is important that, in the run-up to elections, the Security Council and the international community accompany the country and its people towards free and fair elections. Apart from what has been included in the terms of reference, we feel that there is very much a need for engagement. That would also be very much in line with what the African Union has been recommending.

I would like to conclude by thanking you once again, Mr. President, for the opportunity given to us to revisit the problems of Africa. We would like to convey our best wishes to the two leaders and to all the members of the Security Council who will undertake the mission. We wish them every success.

The President: I now call on the representative of South Africa, Ambassador Kumalo, in his capacity as Chairman of the African Union and as the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We are honoured to participate in this meeting of the Security Council. We commend your able stewardship of the Council, Mr. President, during this eventful and critical time. It is indeed important for us during this wrap-up meeting to thoroughly reflect on the work of the Council, particularly in the context of promoting peace and security in Africa.

Over the years, the Security Council has remained actively seized of matters of conflict on the African continent. The Security Council has sought to utilize all the different mechanisms at its disposal in seeking to fulfil its primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in Africa.

The fact-finding trips that the Security Council is about to undertake will add to the practical experience of the Council as it continues to grapple with complex conflicts in West and Central Africa. The African Union is intensely aware of those problems and has actively involved itself in the area of conflict prevention and resolution. The Council's missions will come across conflict situations that have a common denominator: underdevelopment and the scramble for natural resources. There is also the difficult issue of armed groups from neighbouring countries that cross borders to foment violence and defy appeals to return to their countries of origin. These are people who are not refugees and who do not even accept voluntary disarmament and repatriation. There are also indigenous armed groups that refuse to join in negotiated ceasefire agreements, which makes it impossible for their fellow citizens who have embraced peace to rebuild their lives.

The Council's role in these complex challenges remains important, because Article 39 of the Charter confers on the Council the responsibility to decide whether a particular breach of the peace or act of aggression constitutes a threat to international peace and security, and whether to take appropriate steps to maintain or restore peace. Absent that provision, the role of the Security Council in resolving conflicts in Africa would always be challenged. Questions are raised more sharply as recent events have added to the perception that the Security Council may be distracted from conflicts in places such as Ituri, which is located in a remote corner of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Council must remain central to the universal search for peace. The Council has to remain focused in taking effective collective measures to prevent or remove threats to the peace, in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. In that context we should, however, ask if the mechanisms in the Council are adequate to deal with such complex issues of conflict resolution.

The Security Council is the only body that has the global mandate to maintain international peace and security. As such, the Council cannot afford to be seen as either selective or hesitant in becoming engaged in bringing about peace. For the people of Africa, it is not how the Council remains actively seized of their plight that matters, but how effective it is in bringing about peace.

The States members of the African Union have already learned, through their own bitter experience, the vital linkage between peace and security and the broader objectives of sustainable development. Through the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, African leaders have forged a common vision and a shared commitment to a path of sustainable growth and development. They have called on the world community to complement their efforts and to implement the Millennium Declaration's pledge to Africa, which emphasized support for the prevention of conflict. For us in Africa, the Security Council remains an important partner in this noble endeavour.

An encouraging development towards meeting these challenges is the working relationship that is developing between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The creation by the Security Council of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the formation under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict have created a new mechanism that will potentially lead to a more comprehensive approach to addressing conflict situations.

Through such an inclusive process, the Council has the potential to develop a greater sense of the complexities of certain conflict situations and contribute to comprehensive and integrated strategies for peace-building.

The Council also has to consider the availability of resources, both financial and political, in backing up its decisions. United Nations Members have repeatedly noted that the Council has best succeeded when its decisions have been accompanied by unity of purpose and political will. The combination of political will and the requisite resources was perhaps best exemplified by the Council's resolve in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee under the leadership of Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock.

The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union is growing. That relationship centres on numerous practicalities, based on the determining principle that multilateralism remains the only suitable path to global peace and security. The United Nations is the beacon of our belief in fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of every person and the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. Through the Charter, we are resolved to unite our strength against the enemies of peace. For that reason, the many people who continue to suffer the brutality of war and conflict in Africa and elsewhere continue to ask, "If not to the Security Council, then to whom should we turn during our hour of need?"

The President: I thank the representative of South Africa for his kind words addressed to me.

I now call on the representative of Angola, who will speak in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): On behalf of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting at this very meaningful and timely moment — just a few days after we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union.

The agenda proposed by the Pakistani presidency for today's meeting is a mark of the attention which the Security Council gives to the problems affecting the African continent, and reflects the urgent need to find ways to strengthen the commitment of the international community to Africa.

My statement this morning will focus on the need for enhancing the efficiency of the mechanisms currently used by the United Nations in the Organization's engagement with Africa, especially the role of the working groups.

It is gratifying to notice the growing role in the United Nations system of ad hoc groups — the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa; the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict; the groups of friends; and the Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution, on behalf of which I am speaking this morning.

These instruments, if properly used, can and should be important tools in promoting peace and dealing with the crises that afflict the international community, especially on the African continent. It is our view that there is a need to enhance the work of those groups by rendering their recommendations more pertinent to the work of the Security Council. Furthermore, working groups should find mechanisms for cooperation and coordination with sanctions committees, as it is established that the imposition of sanctions often remains an important tool for guaranteeing compliance with internationally accepted norms, leading to the resolution of conflicts. This was the case with Angola, where sanctions against the rebel movement, when properly applied and monitored, became a vital factor towards ending the war in my country.

The Security Council open meeting on the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, held on 22 May 2002 under the leadership of my colleague Ambassador Koonjul, made important recommendations on cooperation with the Economic and Social Council on confidence-building in the Mano River region, on the role of the special representatives of the Secretary-General in Africa, on the establishment of groups of friends and on the question of cooperation with the African Union and subregional organizations.

However, the gap between the decisions and/or recommendations and their implementation continues to be a matter of great concern. Therefore, there is a need for the working groups to undertake a more rigorous assessment of the recommendations in order to make them more implementable and action-friendly by the United Nations system, especially the Security Council. A working group's effectiveness will depend

on its capacity to focus on concrete action or concrete situations and on its ability to mobilize the international community's attention, as well as to provide proper advice and support for an appropriate and timely response.

The case of Guinea-Bissau and the manner in which it is being addressed jointly by the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries emerging from conflict, the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau constitutes a good example of the positive participation of working groups. The coming joint mission to be undertaken by the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to that country will certainly reinforce this point.

As I mentioned earlier, the Ad Hoc working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa made pertinent recommendations to the Security Council on cooperation with the African Union. To meet this objective, better coordination and consultation with the Union and regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern Africa Development Community, is needed. The response of the international community and the Security Council to conflicts still prevailing in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and the Great Lakes, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is a perfect example of what better cooperation can achieve.

I would like to welcome the Secretary-General's efforts aimed at enhancing this cooperation by establishing an Office within the Secretariat to deal especially with African issues. The recent appointment of Mr. Gambari as head of that Office is equally well received. This represents another good example of the assistance being provided to the African Union to enhance its capacity.

The signing by the States members of the African Union of a protocol creating the Peace and Security Council was a significant step taken by the continent to face challenges in conflict prevention, management and resolution. We therefore welcome the United Nations readiness to assist in the implementation of that protocol.

One of the main concerns of the continent continues to be the need for a timely United Nations peacekeeping response to African crises — as has been reiterated once again this morning in earlier statements — as the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and more especially in Bunia clearly demonstrates. This morning, the Council adopted resolution 1484 (2003) authorizing the deployment of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force following a general appeal to Member States. We commend the leadership of France and the active support of members that will be participating in that effort.

I would like to conclude by saying that peace and development are the two main challenges in Africa and in many other regions of the globe today. This demands a comprehensive and multisectoral engagement by the entire international community. This meeting today, ending Pakistan's presidency for the month, should be considered a step forward in our Council's search for new modalities to respond to emerging crises in the world in which we live today.

The President: I thank the representative of Angola for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since this is perhaps the last meeting over which you, Sir, will preside this month, I wish to take this opportunity to express to you my delegation's gratitude for the effective way in which you have led the Council's work during this very difficult month. I also express my delegation's appreciation for your having included on the agenda of this wrap-up meeting the theme "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security".

My delegation believes this exercise to be timely and necessary. The Security Council's missions to Africa have become a crucial instrument for its decision-making process. These missions are carried out with United Nations support and thus with the direct or indirect participation of Member States. My delegation therefore believes that today's discussion is integral to the commitment to the transparency with which the Security Council should undertake its tasks.

The decision-making process in relation to conflicts in Africa must be as comprehensive as possible. Conflicts are caused by a conjunction of circumstances that are often deeply rooted in history, with organizational forms, power structures, formulas for the exploitation of natural resources and ancient modes of domination that are perpetuated by many of

these conflicts. It is necessary for all these elements — ethnic and inter-State disputes, fighting among various political factions, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, the employment of mercenaries and the use of children as combatants — to be taken into account. They must be integrated into the vision that the Security Council will embrace when it takes crucial decisions for the peace and the future of Africa. Mexico believes that analysis of the conflicts must be approached from this comprehensive perspective, also taking into account the regional dimensions that explain their deep-rooted causes. We must do so in dialogue and communication with regional organizations, with the political leaders, with members of civil society — with all those who participate actively in these processes and who must be part of the solution.

The Security Council must also tackle Africa's problems in a creative process of cooperation with United Nations bodies in all spheres of activity. Africa is the point of convergence of all United Nations agencies and of their work. Therefore, Council action must reflect the spirit and the goal of cooperation that we in the Council have called "partnership" with the bodies of the United Nations.

Conflicts in Africa are also associated with unforeseen situations related to grave natural disasters and with endemic situations such as famine and epidemics. Therefore, those elements should also be understood comprehensively in our work. Of course, the financial conditions and the economic prospects that African countries face must also be incorporated as elements of judgement; hence the importance of engaging in dialogue and interaction with the Bretton Woods institutions and other international financial institutions.

To resolve Africa's problems, we must address their causes with long-term endeavours that have a genuinely preventive nature. In that connection, we believe that it is the international community's efforts with regard to education that, over the long term, must yield the best results in order to establish conditions of peace, stability, understanding and harmony in Africa.

All of that can be appreciated when we leave the Council Chamber and go out and encounter reality in Security Council missions to Africa. There is an abyss, sometimes very difficult to cross, between our conceptions of Africa's problems as we sit in this Chamber and those that we gain upon encountering — albeit briefly and sometimes superficially — those problems on our journeys to Africa. But Security Council missions to Africa are proving to be a basic tool for achieving, first of all, a direct dialogue between Security Council members — as was pointed out here by Ambassador Greenstock — and the leaders of the countries with respect to which the Council must take decisions. They are also an opportunity for dialogue with civil society and with the actors involved in the conflicts. They are an opportunity to have direct contact with United Nations operations and to establish more fluid communication — beyond that on paper — with the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and with all the bodies that are working together under the United Nations banner in the Organization's missions in African countries.

From the work that my country is doing in the Sierra Leone Sanctions Committee, we understand that fundamental aspects for making decisive judgements as to the role and nature of the sanctions are the ability to engage in dialogue with the communities affected by such Security Council decisions; the ability to establish direct communication with United Nations representatives who daily assess the impact of sanctions and the difficulties posed by their implementation; and the ability to reaffirm our commitment to full compliance with such measures, face to face with the leaders of the countries in the region and with the political actors whose conduct we wish to influence through such mechanisms.

In that way, the Security Council has, over the past year and a half, carried out a series of missions that, from Mexico's perspective, have had very positive results. In February last year, the Council sent a mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea, which, inter alia, had the task of pointing out to the parties the priority that the Council placed and continues to place on settling conflicts peacefully and by expressing the will of the parties. The Security Council then had the opportunity to support the work of the United Nations and to make the message of peace very clear. The Council has also carried out missions in Central Africa and in West Africa that have been part of its work in recent years. We see the establishment of dialogue between the Council and the main players in the region as the fundamental purpose of those missions.

In that connection, the exchange of opinions with governmental representatives and with members of various political factions have given the Security Council the opportunity to assess the importance of its own decisions in a much more real and direct way. Recently, the Council has considered the question of sending a multilateral force to support the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), particularly in Ituri province. In that respect, my country would like to stress its support for and gratitude to the Uruguayan contingent, which is now trying to carry out its humanitarian mission in Ituri and Bunia under extremely difficult conditions. We believe that the decision adopted by the Council to send an Interim Emergency Multilateral Force to Africa is a correct and necessary decision that expresses the Council's determination to fulfil its commitments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We believe that the mission, to be led by the Permanent Representative of France, will also have the opportunity to assess what new measures the Security Council can adopt in order to help substantively to consolidate the peace process under way in that country and in that region.

We feel that it is particularly important to follow up on the measures proposed by the Panel of Experts with respect to the illegal exploitation of natural resources, which is at the root of many of the conflicts that we must tackle today in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also must make neighbouring countries understand their obligations and their responsibility not only to stay outside of the conflict and fully to respect the sovereignty and self-determination of the Congo, but also to prevent the trafficking of any arms and any action from their territory that would foster violence and confrontation within the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council will also soon undertake a visit to West Africa. This will be a new opportunity to strengthen the efforts of the Council in the region and to provide an accurate regional perspective.

The situation in West Africa has deteriorated following the resurgence of internal conflicts in various countries — conflicts that are interlinked in a very complex fashion. This visit to Guinea-Bissau, to Côte d'Ivoire, to Liberia and to Sierra Leone, as well as dialogue with neighbouring countries in the region, will also be an opportunity for the Security Council to adopt, in future, decisions that will help these peace processes. In particular, the Security Council will have the opportunity directly to assess the difficult conditions being experienced in Liberia, whose situation contributes significantly to the instability prevailing in the region. We must also, in carrying out this exercise, review the role of the sanctions, both in Sierra Leone and in Liberia.

There are other conflict situations in Africa to which the Security Council must also provide its ongoing attention. This is the case of Somalia, where the internal conflict is becoming increasingly acute and the humanitarian situation of the civilian population is constantly worsening. We believe that in this respect the Council must consider additional measures in order to encourage the holding of an inclusive dialogue, with the participation of all of the parties in Somalia, reasserting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity of Somalia.

Lastly, we would like to stress the fundamental threat posed by the illicit trafficking of arms, and its connection with terrorist acts and with the continuation of armed conflicts. We must make an effort to stop the trafficking of small arms and light weapons in Africa, which have the effect of actual weapons of mass destruction. The number of victims claimed annually by conflicts where they proliferate and where there is indiscriminate access to them by combatants shows that these arms are, for all intents and purposes, weapons of mass destruction.

The Security Council must encourage actions to prevent conflicts. To that end, it will be necessary to strengthen the cooperation of the United Nations with regional bodies in the terms already discussed here in previous meetings, in particular in the meeting that took place in April between the Security Council and representatives of various regional organizations, in which Africa was properly represented.

Mexico is determined to continue to foster ties of friendship and cooperation with Africa. Our country is convinced of the need to devote special attention to the peoples of Africa and expresses its willingness to contribute to promoting peace, security and development for the benefit of its peoples.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) *(spoke in Arabic)*: This meeting is being held at a very important time and addresses pressing international issues. The African continent is witnessing an outbreak of armed conflicts. Recent developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Côte d'Ivoire have been characterized by the excessive use of force, violence against civilians and the use of arms as a means of asserting one's presence and of achieving both political or economic aims. Conflicts are threatening to spill over beyond State borders, and there is a danger of their taking on a regional dimension. For these reasons, the Council must take a much more effective and rigorous stand and devise new ways and means of discharging its primary task of maintaining international peace and security in general and in Africa in particular.

We note that, in the face of the bleak political and humanitarian scenario in various regions of Africa, and in the face of the suffering and worsening humanitarian situation of tens of thousands of civilians, the efforts of the United Nations, which represents the will of the international community in dealing with African conflicts, have been characterized by both successes and failures. Hence there is a need to mobilize the political will to assist in the efforts of the Organization, in order to consolidate the progress achieved and to avoid setbacks.

To be sure, the past experience of the United Nations in settling armed conflicts and building peace in various regions of the world, particularly in Africa, has shown that political will is a necessary factor in supporting efforts to settle conflicts and to increase the effectiveness of conflict-management mechanisms.

The key condition for building and creating peace is to ensure a political commitment at all levels — domestic, regional and international — in an integrated and holistic manner. Similarly, the various stakeholders that have an interest in the future role of the United Nations and of the Security Council in dealing with African conflicts are asking themselves whether this role is going to be restricted to managing conflicts, to the maintenance or building of peace and to the provision of humanitarian assistance to those who need it, or if it will enable the United Nations to act effectively in order to prevent and contain conflicts before they break out and before they have claimed victims and displaced civilian populations?

In this respect, Egypt believes that a number of the conflicts that have recently broken out in Africa could have been avoided, or at least contained much earlier.

As a result, one of the crucial challenges for the future role of the United Nations in dealing with conflict in Africa is the establishment of an effective early-warning system through the work of the representative of the Secretary-General and the offices of the United Nations in Africa, under the guidance of the Security Council, in cooperation and coordination with the secretariat of the African Union and regional organizations and actors concerned.

The international community must manage conflicts in Africa by dealing with them in a holistic fashion, encompassing all their political, social and economic aspects. Egypt believes that the role of the United Nations in conflict management in Africa faces a considerable challenge. There is a lack of donor commitment and a failure to meet peace-building commitments in countries emerging from conflict. As well, there is, in the countries concerned, a delay between the implementation of United Nations security policies and the establishment of social and economic infrastructures, in particular the implementation of institution-building programmes; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; and programmes for demining and for prosecuting war crimes among others.

There is no doubt that effective coordination between the United Nations and the African Union, as well as with the regional actors and organizations in Africa, also requires ongoing financial assistance so that those actors and institutions can carry out their difficult peacekeeping duties in the various regions and countries of Africa.

Egypt notes that the Security Council is attempting to use a regional focus in responding to conflicts in Africa; that is thoroughly appropriate. That tendency has been reflected in Council debates, particularly on the conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia in West Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi in Central Africa. A regional focus for conflicts in Africa contributes to containing

those conflicts, limiting their negative impact and enhancing the effective action of the United Nations.

Egypt also welcomes the Council's intention to send two missions to West Africa and Central Africa, in June 2003. That initiative will enable the Council to meet the following goals. First, the Council will be able to reaffirm the international community's commitment to finding balanced, lasting solutions to conflicts in the two regions. Secondly, the Council will be able to explore the realities and developments of the situation, as well as the extent of the people's suffering due to armed conflict. Thirdly, the Council will be able to identify the genuine needs of the United Nations for an effective presence on the ground in areas of conflict. Fourthly, the Council can assess the effectiveness of Council policies and resolutions on conflicts in West and Central Africa.

We hope that the two missions will achieve those goals and return with a clearer, more holistic vision of how the United Nations should deal with conflict in Africa in the future. We also hope that the results of those missions will be followed by the strengthening of United Nations mechanisms for preserving and promoting international peace and security.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Burundi. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, Sir, to recognize the noteworthy achievement of the Pakistan presidency for the current month. It is the result of your great activity and personal skill. Burundi is proud of the work that you have accomplished, and will continue to accomplish, in the Council.

The Security Council devotes the greatest share of its time to debates on conflicts in Africa. It is regrettable that Africa always remains in a situation of conflict, which, unfortunately, is slow in reaching an end. The Council will soon undertake missions to Central Africa and West Africa in order to observe on the ground the difficulties of the various peace processes under way and to discuss with national and regional leaders, as well as with political and military actors, how to restore peace in those two African regions in crisis.

I will speak particularly of the upcoming Security Council mission to Central Africa. In that context, I associate myself with the statement to be made shortly on behalf of the Central African States by the Ambassador of the Congo, the current Chairman of the Economic Community of Central African States. It is true and important that solutions for the region must be integrated in order to achieve peace, security and stability in the entire region. The conflicts are interconnected. As well, individual situations are made difficult on all levels by the conflicts ravaging this part of Africa.

I welcome the fact that the United Nations will send, at almost the same time, a multidisciplinary mission of United Nations agencies active in Central Africa. All these missions testify to the real commitment of the entire United Nations system to stabilizing Central Africa.

Burundi greatly appreciates the Council's visits on the ground, its missions to Central Africa for four consecutive years. They have contributed to progress in the search for peace, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi. On the eve of this fourth visit to the subregion, my delegation would like to make the following comments and recommendations so that the mission can truly meet the expectations of the populations that are victims of a state of war that has become unbearable and so that the mission can strengthen the new leadership in the second phase of the transition in Burundi. That transition is crucial and must end a programme expected to last 18 months, while adding the programme that could not be accomplished during the first part of the transition because of the ongoing war.

The first recommendation: we believe that the Council's missions should give priority to calling for the respect for and implementation of political agreements and ceasefires that have already been signed. So long as signatories do not attempt to implement what they have agreed — even though that may of course require many concessions on their part — the peace progress could become bogged down or even regress.

With regard to Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Lusaka and Arusha Agreements continue to be the fundamental points of reference. However, the side agreements that have been signed since then should not be overlooked. In that connection, the Security Council should remind everyone that they must respect their commitments,

given that there is a tendency among some signatories to question these agreements or — in the case of those who have not signed the agreements and have been invited to do so — simply to threaten to attack the agreements and to nullify them.

Among the commitments undertaken in all the agreements regarding Burundi there are also measures to be taken against those who reject a negotiated peace. Both the region and the United Nations were witnesses when all that was agreed upon and signed in the Arusha Agreement. It is always good to remind the armed groups and movements who refuse to come to the negotiating table of all that. I refer to the Lusaka and Arusha Agreements because they are very closely interrelated. There will be no peace in Burundi unless there is peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and vice versa. The same can be said for the region as a whole.

My second recommendation is that Security Council missions to Central Africa should promote lasting solutions, as the region is still living under the threat of a new genocide. The deep-rooted tensions linked to colonial history and to the poor leadership of the first years of independence are at the heart of the repeated violence in the subregion that culminated in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, as well as the genocidal massacres that took place in Burundi in 1993, a few months before the genocide in Rwanda. This has also culminated in today's humanitarian catastrophe in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The ideology of genocide and those responsible for genocide remain in the region, spreading arms and death across borders. In order to put to rest the demons of violence and to end the physical extermination of neighbours, we should endeavour to remember what took place in the Great Lakes region of Africa so that we may discover the truth, better address the problem at its roots and prevent similar catastrophes for future generations.

The signatories of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi agreed to ask the Security Council to establish a neutral and independent international judicial commission of inquiry to determine responsibility for all the violence that has characterized the country's life since its independence in 1962. The people of Burundi await the Council's response during its visit to Burundi.

However, the Security Council must understand clearly that the purpose of revisiting the past is not to reopen wounds or to exact revenge. Rather, it is to gain understanding and to make it possible for those responsible to reflect and perhaps to ask forgiveness of their past victims and to be reconciled with them. A healing process is necessary. The Arusha Agreement calls for a criminal tribunal to punish these crimes. But it also calls for a truth and reconciliation commission. All of this will of course depend upon the recommendations to emerge from the inquiry. That is why the commission is so important. It should be set up as soon as possible, as the Council has already done in similar situations, such as in Sierra Leone and, soon, in Cambodia. As I have said, the purpose is to promote reconciliation on a solid foundation. As someone said earlier with regard to the fight against impunity, the Security Council is called upon to help Burundi find the means to fight this phenomenon, as that would be the surest way to build a future on a solid foundation.

My third recommendation is that Security Council missions be encouraged to deliver a clear message to the protagonists in our conflicts. We often hear from the public of the Central Africa subregion — at least in Burundi — that the Security Council is being repetitive in its messages. Perhaps they are not aware of the virtues of repetition; or perhaps people forget that it is the protagonists who have the primary responsibility to settle their disputes. The Council can only help Burundians and Congolese to achieve peace.

Nevertheless, there are situations that call for more firmness on the part of the international community. When, for example, the rebel group of Pierre Nkurunziza — the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Front pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD) — launches deadly bombs against the capital's neighbourhoods or other population centres throughout the country, that is called terrorism and must be condemned as such. When that group takes schoolchildren and student hostage and places them in combat, it is violating the Convention on the Rights of the Child. That too should be noted.

Along the same lines, the movements and organizations that defy the international community by refusing to come to a negotiating table open to everyone should be neutralized. That is true in Burundi of the Parti Libération du Peuple Hutu-Forces nationales de libération (PALIPEHUTU-FNL) of Rwasa Agathon. In a region that, as I have said, is still

living under the threat of genocide, and in a country such as Burundi, where the situation is so conducive to a repetition of similar violence, how can we continue to accept a movement that bases its ideology on ethnic violence? All of this must be said, and such movements must be condemned.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Council, which, in its presidential statement of 2 May, reminded the PALIPEHUTU-FNL that the international community was finding it increasingly difficult to understand the legitimacy of its struggle.

Fourthly, it is important for the Security Council to adapt the mandates of its interventions to the often tricky conflict situations in Africa. In both Central and West Africa, setbacks have sometimes derailed the efforts of United Nations or regional observer or peacekeeping missions. In Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council and regional organizations are sometimes suddenly called upon to modify mandates and to increase mission troop levels. Such situations are sometimes unpredictable. At other times it is inevitable that such situations should arise, because the terms of a mandate are not adapted or the troop numbers are insufficient. The case of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a good reminder of that.

With regard to Burundi, the presence on the ground of a United Nations Office, as well Ambassador Dinka's chairmanship of the Committee charged with following up the Peace Agreement, reflect the unfailing commitment of the United Nations to Burundi.

The newly created African Union responded to the United Nations appeal for an African solution to African problems by deciding to send an African ceasefire observer mission, consisting of some 3,000 troops. After some initial delays, it seems that the means are finally being found to deploy that mission, which is, in fact, a force. But that effort must be supported, because the force must be able to work for some time. Apart from the financial and logistic problems, there are also questions regarding the mandate of the force, which will, we hope, be discussed with the Security Council during its mission. This will be the first time that the pan-African organization has sent such a large force to a member country.

Of course, a decision will have to be made about what mandate to base the African mission's mandate upon. Will it be based on Chapter VI, VII or VIII of the Charter? Which of the three is best suited to the Burundi situation? The Deputy President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, representing the facilitator, Nelson Mandela, explained to the Council last December that the African mission must ensure that the ceasefire is observed and that, at the appropriate time, it hands over to a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Burundi.

Here, I would also like to say that it is important for us to demonstrate flexibility with regard to the principles that guide the dispatch of a peacekeeping force, because situations in different countries vary. The United Nations, for example, hesitated to send a peacekeeping mission to Burundi because the rebels refused to lay down their arms before cantonment. That was one reason why the Security Council was unable to decide to send a mission. But if we demonstrate a little patience and flexibility, the rebels will be encouraged to lay down their arms once they are cantoned. Once they are in that situation and we can work with them psychologically, conditions might be created under which a peacekeeping operation could function.

The transition from the African mission to a United Nations mission need not be difficult, but of course it must be prepared for. That is particularly important, as a United Nations peacekeeping mission would include a military component, as well as a political, humanitarian and, most important, a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration component, in addition to electoral support and so forth. The African mission does not have all of those components, but they will be necessary in the case of Burundi.

There must be cooperation between the Council and the African Union so that the ongoing efforts of the international community in Burundi can be successful. The forthcoming Council mission will provide an opportunity for discussion with the Burundian authorities.

Lastly — my final recommendation — the population of the Great Lakes region hopes that the political support of the Council will be accompanied by an improvement in the economic and humanitarian situation. In a region where political conflict is exacerbated by insufficient resources to go around and chronic poverty, the message of peace is wasted on

people who are starving. Of course, significant efforts are now being made. But they are still inadequate, and the mobilizing role of the Council in encouraging donors will be decisive. According to a Burundian proverb, those who share little or nothing accuse each other of being thieves. That reality is still more dramatic when it leads to the physical elimination of others in order to take their place, or to take a larger piece of the pie.

Before concluding, I would like to stress the importance of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in assisting in conflict and post-conflict situations in Africa. Burundi has sent a request to the Economic and Social Council for the establishment of an ad hoc advisory group to follow up the economic and social situation in Burundi and to mobilize donors. I believe that a decision on that issue will be taken at the next substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva. We hope that, as soon as such a group has been set up, it will be able to work closely with a similar group established under the auspices of the Security Council so that their efforts can be synergized and help to return stability and peace to Burundi. I hope that the forthcoming Council mission to Africa will be a complete success.

The President: I thank the representative of Burundi for his kind words addressed the delegation of Pakistan.

Mr. Chungong Ayafor (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish like preceding speakers to thank the Pakistani presidency, and in particular you, Sir, for your highly creative initiative of organizing at the end of your presidency of the Security Council this wrap-up meeting on "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security".

I welcome the presence among us of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari. I also wish to thank him for his important contribution at the opening of today's debate. His forceful suggestions will undoubtedly help our Council to improve its efficiency in addressing African issues.

It is perfectly clear that this open debate, which is benefiting from the participation of States non-members of the Council, will allow us to take into account their views on this issue. My delegation believes that this is a guarantee of legitimacy and of broad approval of the proposals to be made during the course of today's discussion. At a time when the international community's attention is focused on other theatres of conflict, Cameroon welcomes your decision, Sir, to centre this discussion on United Nations action in conflicts in Africa.

At first glance, the subject might seem to have lost some of its lustre and to be somewhat threadbare, having been taken up so often in recent years by the Security Council, which now devotes 62 per cent of its time to this issue, by other United Nations bodies and by myriad other international forums.

Obviously, Africa remains at the heart of the Security Council's concerns. Indeed, the Council's members and — with respect to an open debate on conflicts in Africa — the States Members of the United Nations have demonstrated outstanding creative insight in offering fresh and innovative solutions and strategies. All that is now needed to implement these suggestions is the genuine political will of the parties involved and the firm resolve of the members of the Security Council to support Africa in its struggle to promote peace and security on the continent. However, the approach that has been chosen is particularly novel insofar as it stresses the contribution of Security Council missions in areas prone to conflict, in this instance the promotion of peace and security in Africa.

As members of the Council are aware, missions of the Security Council in general, especially to Africa, are vital and play a critical role. They allow the Council's members to assess the situation on the ground, to enhance dialogue with the parties and to obtain information directly from the protagonists. Moreover, such missions allow the Council's members, inter alia, to better grasp first hand the nuances and structures of the conflicts in question. They also allow the Council to present a united front, which is extremely important, especially with respect to the parties to the conflict and the personnel of United Nations agencies active in the field.

I should like to focus my remarks on a few of the questions raised by the problem being addressed at this wrap-up debate: the role of Security Council missions and the relations they may engender between the Council and African regional organizations.

In recent years, out of 19 Security Council missions to conflict zones throughout the world, 13 were dispatched to Africa, as though to justify the time that the Security Council has devoted to the consideration of conflict situations there. While Security Council missions in the field provide an opportunity unequivocally and publicly to broadcast the positions and decisions of the Council, should they not also — given their political impact on the protagonists — become an extremely useful tool for preventive diplomatic action? In situations in which there is every forewarning of potential conflict, such missions could make a significant contribution to defusing tensions before hostilities erupt and could usefully complement the preventive diplomacy of the Secretary-General.

Moreover, it would be desirable for Security Council missions to become a consistent and integral part of the Council's decision-making process. The level and quality of the information that they provide to members of the Council through direct contact with the protagonists on the ground have a definite influence on members' perception of the situation and can ultimately have a positive impact on later decisions. In such circumstances, should the Security Council not plan to systematize these missions in the field, conditions permitting, when it is preparing to take an important decision on any given situation? The members would thereby be able to adopt their positions in full awarèness of all realities in the field.

Of course, in my delegation's view, such an approach is not about bargaining over the details of any future decision the Council may take or about going into the field with preconceived notions. The idea, rather, is simply to arrive at a deeply-felt conviction by listening to the parties to the conflict and to all the protagonists while sending them strong messages. We have no problem with a decision to send a mission into the field that takes into account the views expressed in open debate by States that are not members of the Council, since some will be regional actors. The Council's credibility cannot suffer from such participation in the preparation of decisions, including — depending on the case — the adoption of approaches designed to motivate, suggest decisions to the parties and, if necessary, help them to understand. In any case, the parties' perception of the Security Council's decisions can only be improved by their having been consulted and heeded, while the Council need not feel bound. The most important thing is to reach a heartfelt conviction that allows a fully informed decision to be taken.

We regret, however, that the planned Security Council mission to West Africa could not take place under those conditions. Along the same lines, regional organizations are among the actors that are met on the ground during Security Council missions. It will be recalled that, on 11 April 2003, the Council devoted a public debate to its relations with regional organizations in the light of the new challenges to international peace and security. On that occasion, Cameroon focused its statement on the Council's cooperation with African regional and subregional organizations.

Security Council missions are also valuable opportunities to improve working relations with African regional and subregional organizations, particularly in the way the Council considers decisions and positions that it takes on issues of interest to the continent that are before the Council. The Security Council has, in a consistent and encouraging way, developed exemplary institutional relationships with the African Union and with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We saw that recently with the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, for which ECOWAS conducted a mission here in New York and received the Council's blessing. However, the Council has sometimes proved to be highly selective when there has been a contradictory regional decision on a conflict under consideration.

We encourage the Security Council to strengthen its institutional relationships and to maintain them during its field missions, since one of the guarantees of effectiveness would be to achieve a perfect balance between regional efforts and Council action for conflict prevention and settlement in Africa. My delegation is eagerly awaiting the time when the Council will be able to work in a completely harmonious way with regional organizations, regardless of their political influence or the perception that its permanent members may have of them. This issue deserves much attention.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the forthcoming Security Council missions in the Great Lakes region and in West Africa will be an opportunity to promote the ongoing peace process, to explain Council positions and to become fully convinced of the need to finally adopt a comprehensive

approach at the level of those subregions. It must be said that West Africa enjoys the advantage of having a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the entire subregion. We hope that the next United Nations inter-institution mission in Central Africa, together with the Security Council mission in the Great Lakes, will result in recommendations to that end.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): We are very pleased to participate in this discussion today. I believe it is a very timely and useful initiative on your part, Mr. President, to give Security Council members a chance to address their expectations of the upcoming missions and to hear reactions and comments from other members. I think we have had some useful commentary and observations today that will better inform our thinking, both about these two specific missions and about the process.

Many speakers have already addressed the important role that the United Nations and the Security Council have to play in Africa, and they have put forward various ideas about how that impact could be improved. But I think we all recognize that the fact that we are sending two Security Council missions to Africa in the next 45 days indicates how important we think Security Council engagement is in helping to find solutions.

Of course, when we talk about Africa in the Security Council, we tend to focus on crisis and on the many problems that exist, and that is entirely correct. The missions help us to do that better and in a more focused way. I did want to note, however, that Africa has come a long way in recent years. A decade ago, single-party States and military dictatorship were the norm on the continent; today, we see democracy in approximately 33 African countries, according to a recent United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report. Many countries are making significant strides towards effective governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development reflects African commitment to sustaining and expanding those positive changes. That is all to be welcomed, and we strongly support that process.

We have also seen some long-term conflicts come to an end. Last October, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Rome Peace Accords, which brought peace to Mozambique. Sierra Leone and Angola are emerging from long years of bloodshed and are now on their way to post-conflict reconstruction and economic revitalization.

But, as we all know too well, many parts of the continent remain stuck in conflict, and there is much work to be done by the United Nations, by the Security Council and by all Member States of the United Nations. The dire situation in the Ituri region has commanded much of the Council's attention in recent weeks — perhaps not as publicly as other issues we have been addressing, but those on the Council know how much time we have been spending on it — and today we adopted a resolution to address that situation. Much like the British in Sierra Leone, France has taken the lead on a multinational force that we fully support and for which we commend the French Government. We expect the Security Council mission to enable the Council to contribute in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to a long-term strategy to end that terrible conflict.

As we look at the many trouble spots in Africa, many of which have already been addressed today, we seek to find ways to build sustained commitment from the Council and from the United Nations, but, very importantly — as some others have already pointed out — from Africans themselves. We support the efforts of neighbouring and other regional States to help to resolve conflicts. The United States has provided money and training assistance to several of those operations and initiatives, and we will continue to find ways to help to create the right context for peace in each area of crisis.

The fragile peace process in Burundi continues to require careful monitoring and sustained assistance, and we were heartened by the transition of the presidency on 1 May. In West Africa, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is precarious and, again, requires international attention to ensure that the parties continue to cooperate in implementing the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and that we all work to ensure sufficient funding for the operations of the Economic Community of West African States, which will be key to the long-term success of this mission and of our peace efforts.

The United States firmly supports sanctions regimes directed against parties that are intent on continuing the cycle of violence and instability. By restricting access to the arms and the financing used to

undermine international security, sanctions can be a valuable tool in minimizing threats. Our goal is not to punish, but to use sanctions to change the policies of regimes that threaten their neighbours, and we all know who they are.

With respect to Liberia, the Security Council has adopted strong sanctions measures. The Liberian people are facing a severe economic and political crisis brought about by years of civil war that President Taylor has repeatedly exported across his neighbours' borders. The upcoming peace talks in Ghana provide an opportunity in which the Council may need to be prepared to play an eventual support role.

Also, in the long term, support for conflict resolution and prevention is well served by respect for international human rights and humanitarian norms, as well as a commitment to good governance. The United States Government is currently involved in a variety of programmes in several African countries designed to promote democracy, good governance and economic development. We also hope to work with our African partners to further promote these goals through the Millennium Challenge Account, which has good governance, sound economic policy and investment in people as its three pillars.

However, as Ambassador De La Sablière and others have pointed out, ultimately solutions to Africa's conflicts must come from the parties to the conflict themselves. They cannot be imposed from the outside. Regional and international actors and the Council can provide the necessary assistance to help maintain peace, but genuine progress depends, in the end, on the political will and meaningful positive steps of the belligerents on the ground.

Our task — one that we hope the upcoming Security Council missions will promote — is to push belligerents to make the key choices for peace and then to help the parties reach that end once they have made that decision.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mota Sardenberg (Brazil): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you and your delegation for your excellent work in guiding the Council's deliberations during the current month. Your initiative in organizing a debate on conflicts in Africa and on the importance of Security Council missions and of United Nations mechanisms in promoting peace and stability is certainly very timely. It also provides an additional opportunity to focus attention on the north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where a dramatic situation is unfolding that could deteriorate to the point of endangering an important region of Africa, with serious humanitarian consequences.

Despite our limitations, Brazil will contribute to the United Nations rapid deployment force adopted today by the Security Council, and we wish to commend the French Government for the role it has played in this respect. Our Government supports the recent call of Secretary-General Kofi Annan for a peacekeeping force with a mandate stronger than the one given to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), in order to tackle the violence that has erupted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Out of solidarity, Brazil is greatly concerned with the course of events in Africa. My country owes much of its identity to the vitality of its African heritage. In addition, fraternal relations have been built on the basis of our ethnic, cultural and historical affinities. Finally, Brazil fully recognizes that peace, security and development in Africa are crucial not only to the African people themselves, but also to the international community as a whole.

As clearly stated by President Lula da Silva, strengthening ties with Africa is a political, moral and historical obligation for us. In this spirit, our Government is engaged in reinvigorating bilateral relations with African countries. The Brazilian Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Celso Amorim, has just completed visits to seven African countries, thus paving the way for President Lula da Silva's visit to the continent next August.

At the same time, Brazil and its African partners have been exploring possibilities for mutual cooperation within the framework of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, to which five African countries belong.

Deep transformations have brought Africa to the forefront of the international agenda. Conflicts are perhaps the most visible and disturbing feature of this

process of change. But there have also been important, positive developments, as shown by trends towards democracy and by the willingness of African leaders to devote their energy and creativity to social and economic reconstruction, as embodied in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The United Nations continues to be a source of hope in Africa. When peace is challenged, we expect the Security Council to make use of the entire range of its diplomatic resources.

Brazil has taken part in United Nations peacekeeping operations which were decisive for achieving peace and stability in Angola and Mozambique.

Security Council missions such as those scheduled for Central and West Africa next month are valuable, as they enable direct interaction with local actors, assert a legitimate international presence and reaffirm the commitment to peace and stability.

Bearing in mind the patterns related to the upsurge or resurgence of conflicts in Africa, one should address the root causes of conflict with a view to creating sustainable conditions for peace and stability. Conflict prevention involves not only the prudent use of the measures at the disposal of the Security Council, but also efforts to promote development strategies and support poverty-eradication measures.

The shared responsibility of all — Member States, the Organization itself, international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, the international donor community and civil society groups — is an important ingredient of successful strategies in Africa. Closer coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council could prove to be an indispensable tool to address issues related to conflict prevention or resolution. We value the recent creation of an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau within the Economic and Social Council, in which Brazil is participating. The upcoming mission of the Security Council and members of the Advisory Group to Guinea-Bissau, in which Brazil will take part, is a positive example of the potential for coordination among the principal organs of the United Nations.

The fact that that African countries hold the responsibility for their own development should not be ignored. Since its inception, NEPAD has been a cause for optimism as to Africa's destiny. It contains mutually reinforcing measures that allow for the creation of a virtuous circle of socio-political inclusion, development and peace. NEPAD also offers new opportunities regarding development assistance.

Resources to support NEPAD could be usefully channelled through multilateral institutions to foster triangular as well as South-South cooperation. Since 1996, Brazil has followed a debt-alleviation policy as regards African countries that has contributed to the success of initiatives such as NEPAD. In recent years, we have written off more than $1 billion in debt in the hope of fostering, to the extent of our ability, development in Africa.

The peace and development issues and the problems that affect many African countries are really very complex indeed. Their resolution depends on political will, solidarity and coherent and effective strategies. In this effort, all of us have a role to play. Brazil is striving to do its part.

The President: The last speaker before we break for lunch is the representative of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ikouebe (Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to speak to the Council today on behalf of the members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS): Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

First, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your initiative of convening this meeting, which provides the subregion I represent with an opportunity to sketch the general outline of developments taking place in that part of the African continent in the area of peace and security, within the framework of partnership with the United Nations. I would also like to congratulate the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Mr. Gambari, for his excellent briefing, which contained suggestions that were entirely compatible with the expectations of Central Africa.

For 11 years now, Central Africa has had a United Nations body for cooperative action tasked with promoting preventive diplomacy in this subregion

universally viewed as particularly sensitive: the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. The Committee held its nineteenth ministerial meeting two weeks ago in Brazzaville, from 14 to 17 May 2003.

Since I will later focus on the United Nations missions in Central Africa, I would like to point out that those missions have been intensively prepared for several weeks now in New York, where representatives of the Central African countries have gathered since the beginning of this month to meet with high Secretariat officials to discuss the content of the two missions: the Security Council mission and the inter-agency mission. Both are to go to Central Africa at the beginning of next month, and our representatives have been making preparations for the visit. Since the Congo is the current Chairman of ECCAS, it was my honour to represent all my colleagues at the ministerial meeting in Brazzaville — I shall later describe that meeting. A report on the meeting will be distributed later to all States Members of the United Nations.

I would like to stress that at that important meeting, the ministers, above all, welcomed the progress made in most States of the subregion in the area of peace and security. In Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, my own country of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, significant progress has been observed, although that progress remains to be consolidated in certain cases.

That is why urgent appeals have been made to the international community, in particular to the United Nations and the donor community, to provide the appropriate, substantial assistance enabling the stabilization and subsequent improvement of the situation. In particular, there is need to help in the implementation of peace and ceasefire agreements when they have been signed, and to support the various programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. There is need also to provide assistance to refugees and displaced persons.

The ministers noted that in most cases, we must above all provide concrete follow-up to the financial pledges already made by the international community for countries such as Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Naturally, everyone is aware that peace-building also requires, above all, the improvement of the living conditions of the population and the economic reconstruction of the countries.

With respect to the Central African Republic in particular, the ministers of the countries members of ECCAS meeting in Brazzaville adopted a joint declaration appealing to the international community to provide substantial assistance to that country at this crucial yet promising stage.

The ministers also expressed their concern at the tragedy unfolding in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular in Bunia. They called on the Security Council to amend the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in order to adapt it to the situation on the ground. In that respect, ECCAS welcomes the adoption by the Security Council this morning of resolution 1483 (2003), authorizing the immediate deployment of a multinational force to Bunia.

I should like to express the gratitude of the countries of Central Africa to the United Nations, which over recent months has created many initiatives for the subregion. We recall the Council's 22 October 2002 meeting on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations system and the Central African region in the maintenance of peace and security. That meeting led to the Council's presidential statement of 31 October 2002 (S/PRST/2002/31), which gave new impetus to the partnership between the United Nations and Central Africa and which served as a frame of reference for the discussions of the nineteenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee, to which I referred earlier.

That is why the ministers have welcomed the dispatch of a Security Council mission to the subregion of Central Africa in early June, to visit areas where great tension persists. They welcome, as well, an inter-agency assessment mission tasked with formulating an approach for problems of peace, security and development in Central Africa that is comprehensive, integrated, resolute and concerted in nature. The ministers expressed the hope that this inter-agency mission might recommend, among other things, the creation of a subregional United Nations office to support the work of peacekeeping and peace-building missions and of the special representatives and special envoys of the Secretary-General in Central Africa.

As well, the ministers welcomed the preparations for an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region. They issued an appeal for all countries of Central Africa to participate in the organization and holding of the conference.

Finally, since we are discussing conflict prevention and resolution, I would be remiss if I concluded without announcing that previous to the Brazzaville ministerial meeting of the Advisory Committee, a seminar was held from 12 to 14 May on the implementation in Central Africa of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The outcome of the seminar, in particular the plan for the subregion's activities, will be presented during the first biennial meeting of countries Members of the United Nations, which will be held in New York from 7 to 11 July 2003.

The President: I thank the representative of the Congo for his kind words addressed to the Pakistan delegation.

There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting until 3.15 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4766 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4766th meeting

Friday, 30 May 2003, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-37710 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.25 p.m.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Let me begin by saying that we fully endorse the statement that will be made later by the presidency of the European Union on behalf of all its member States.

I would like to thank you and your delegation, Mr. President, for having convened this very important meeting.

Germany welcomes the fact that the Council gives a great deal of attention to the situation in Africa. That is where most conflicts are taking place, with the greatest human suffering. It is therefore appropriate to have two upcoming Security Council missions focus on the major African issues. We expect fresh impetus for future Council action.

The work of regional organizations in Africa is highly commendable, and it shows a growing sense of responsibility. I would like to pay tribute in particular to current efforts by the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the prevention and settlement of conflicts. By promoting a political settlement and contributing to peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, individual countries such as South Africa show strong leadership in promoting stability in a conflict situation. The same is true for those countries providing troops for the African mission in Burundi and for other regional initiatives.

We particularly welcome the decision taken by the Security Council this morning to authorize a peacekeeping mission to Bunia, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thereby bringing relief and security to the suffering population. We commend France for having taken the lead in this mission.

The primary responsibility for creating the necessary conditions to prevent crises and to take measures to solve conflicts lies with the affected countries themselves. The international community can help, but its support can be effective only if the parties themselves decide to bring about a solution to the conflict that is conducive to durable peace. That brings into focus the importance of a regional approach to crisis situations in Africa — in particular in West Africa and the Great Lakes region, where many problems are interlinked and instability seems to be spreading. Let me highlight just three of these interlinked problems: first, the plundering of natural resources; secondly, the flow of weapons; and, thirdly, the refugee problem.

On the first point, the plundering of natural resources, we feel that this often fuels and prolongs conflicts. We see the worst example of that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An intensive dialogue with Governments and political leaders is necessary. Where dialogue fails, international pressure on Governments, companies and individuals must be the next step. A good example of the dialogue we envisage is the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their reports have had positive results, because Governments have taken action and companies have been encouraged to review their policies.

The second point, the continuous flow of weapons and other military materiel to belligerents, is another important issue. In our view, neighbouring States must cooperate in the effort, and muster the political will, to stop the flow of arms to belligerents. If failure to do so is due to a lack of capabilities, those have to be strengthened. In addition, better implementation of Security Council resolutions is necessary. For example, effective implementation of existing sanctions regimes for Liberia and Somalia could give considerable support to regional mediation efforts between the parties to those conflicts. In both cases panels of experts established by the Security Council are working very effectively to monitor and improve the implementation of those sanctions regimes. They are supplying the Council with important recommendations. It is a matter of political will among Council members to then use those findings effectively.

Further measures to control the illicit flow of small arms have to be taken. I fully agree with Ambassador Aguilar Zinser, who said this morning that small arms and small weapons are the real weapons of mass destruction: they kill more people than any other weapon. This implies that we must not only see to it that we curtail the purchase of such weapons on the demand side, but also that we establish controls on the supply side. The United Nations weapons register is an important tool in this regard.

Finally, the third example of the regional dimension of a prevailing problem is the large numbers of refugees, displaced persons and other vulnerable groups. As witnessed in the conflicts in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, refugees are often driven back and forth between the changing front lines of a conflict. The fragile stability achieved in Sierra Leone is tested by the influx of new refugees from neighbouring countries. We therefore believe the Security Council should, on the basis of the results of its mission, seriously consider a comprehensive approach to stabilize this region.

With regard to strengthening African capabilities in the fields of the prevention, management and solution of armed conflict, Germany is fully committed to the strategic goal expressed in the G-8 Africa Action Plan to enhance technical and financial assistance. Its goal is that by 2010 African countries and regional and subregional organizations will be able to engage even more effectively to prevent and resolve violent conflict on the continent and to undertake peace support operations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The instruments are mostly there, but we must generate the political will to use them effectively.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this wrap-up meeting — a meeting that is also a preparation for the two missions that are to leave for Africa in the coming days. I would also like to thank Ibrahim Gambari for his statement this morning. I believe that a number of his recommendations should be considered carefully by the Council.

As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria associates itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to make a few brief comments in my national capacity.

Bulgaria considers it natural that a great deal of the Security Council's effort and time, and much of its agenda, should be devoted to Africa, since the conflicts on that continent have an unfortunate tendency to be intense, long-running and cyclical in nature. They take a heavy toll in terms of the number of victims and the human suffering they cause. From that perspective, it is important for the Security Council and the United Nations system to continue not just to have a presence on the African continent, but to be very active there. The missions that the Council has been undertaking for some years now on that continent are a manifestation of the sustained attention the United Nations gives to Africa.

This morning the two leaders of the missions — Jean-Marc de La Sablière and Jeremy Greenstock — clearly set out the objectives of those missions. I have little to add, but I would like simply to refer to a comment by Ambassador Pleuger relating to the problem of small arms. That is certainly a major problem in Africa, and it is linked to the issue of the illegal exploitation of natural resources, since the exploitation of such resources is the main source of funding for the arms trade.

I agree with his analysis, but I would like to draw the attention of Council members to one of the links in the chain of the arms trade — international arms dealers. This is a relatively small group of individuals who are well known to the legal authorities and the police in many countries throughout the world. Those who work on sanctions committees are well aware that the same names crop up again and again. We must begin to deal with that problem once and for all, as it is of crucial importance for the African continent, as well as other parts of the world. It also has a negative impact on the countries where such arms brokers operate, as they are a source of corruption with respect to administrations of many arms-producing countries that serve as intermediaries in this traffic. I wanted to make that point during this debate, because it seemed that, in the context of the fight against organized crime — and this is clearly one aspect of that fight — we could not remain silent on the harmful role of such arms brokers.

Another point to which I would like to refer is the partnership of the Security Council with African regional and subregional organizations, which I think we all agree is very important. Judging from my own personal experience, very often such organizations need enhanced capacity — institutional, financial and personnel capacity — in reacting to crisis situations.

With regard to the situation in the Great Lakes region, I believe that it is important to ensure that regional and subregional cooperation not be confined merely to the drawing up of successive peace plans but go beyond that. In this context, the experience of certain continents — and I, of course, can speak of Europe — could be considered by our African friends.

The situation with regard to the reciprocal recognition of borders, for example, is somewhat similar to that in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, when the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was involved. That might not provide an exact model, but it could prove useful to African countries.

Before concluding, I would like to make one point very forcefully. Our experience during the Security Council missions has shown us the importance on the ground of the work of non-governmental organizations. Those organizations do outstanding work, and their partnership with the United Nations is extremely useful and should be encouraged.

I must say that our discussions on Africa would not make much headway if we did not take account of the global context in which African conflicts take place. Africans often come up against globalization in the form of the internationalization of arms trafficking, which, in its turn, benefits from a very effective international banking system. I believe that to some extent, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations represent the human face of globalization. That is why the role of the United Nations in Africa is irreplaceable.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation for your leadership, Sir, in convening this meeting to address the situations in West and Central Africa, which have become of grave concern to the international community. It is timely, in our view, for the Security Council to dispatch missions to those regions to gain a precise understanding of the situations and the gravity of the crises and to directly address the question of what effective measures can be taken by the United Nations.

Conflict resolution in Africa requires an enhanced and comprehensive approach to ensure and coordinate cooperation by various actors within the international community. We hope that, upon returning from the missions, the members of the Council will share with all of us the first-hand knowledge and experiences they have gained so that the international community can effectively tackle the problems in the regions.

We welcome the efforts of the Security Council, especially the adoption of the resolution today with regard to the situation in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is one of the main destinations of the mission to Central Africa, I understand. It is our hope that the mission, through its direct assessment of the situation on the ground, will provide us with recommendations to consider carefully whether there is a need to expand the peacekeeping operation in the near future.

One of the most disheartening characteristics of the conflicts we are witnessing in West and Central Africa is their spillover from one country to another and, as a consequence, the regionalization, as it were, of those conflicts. Let me explain why I said "disheartening". Peace and stability in a society are essential for development. It is profoundly sad that the African continent, where development is perhaps more necessary than in any other region of the world, is most frequently faced with the scourge of conflicts. Some believe that conflicts erupt because of underdevelopment and others maintain that underdevelopment is a result of conflicts. I believe that both arguments have their own points and it might not be useful to judge which is more correct. It is a vicious circle that we must do our utmost to stop.

It is out of this awareness that Japan is supporting the ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Sierra Leone, for instance, while at the same time providing financial assistance, through the Economic Community of West African States, to the all-Liberia round-table conference that will be held next month in Ghana. Since the situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia are closely interrelated, it is our sincere hope that, by simultaneously restoring stability in those two neighbouring countries, we can prevent the spillover of the conflicts and enhance the stability of the entire subregion.

Of course, the resolution of a conflict depends ultimately upon the willingness and efforts of the conflicting parties themselves — that is, they must address their problems with a sense of ownership. But the achievement of this goal can and must be fostered through cooperation or partnership with the international community. Just this month, the Government of Japan announced its new Initiative for Cooperation for Africa, the three main pillars of which are consolidation of peace, human-centred development and poverty reduction through economic growth. Under the first pillar, we will support activities for the consolidation of peace in the fields of

reintegration of ex-combatants into civil society, demining, small arms and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. These activities are implemented through Grant Aid for Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building and the Trust Fund for Human Security.

I am pleased to note that in Angola and Sierra Leone the prolonged conflicts have recently ended and peace has been restored. If those two countries are able to continue to promote their development as they have done since the end of the conflicts, their experience of success in building upon the peace will provide an important lesson and incentive for other conflict-torn countries in Africa. In this sense, Japan would like to commend and support as much as possible the efforts of those countries towards the consolidation of peace and the promotion of development.

Last but not least, I would like to refer to the point which the Ambassador of Bulgaria just stressed. I, too, believe that the cooperation of the countries of Africa is most appropriate and effective for the resolution of armed conflicts on the continent. We therefore strongly hope that the African Union, regional organizations and ad hoc groups of friendly African countries will pursue initiatives for the resolution of conflicts in Central and West Africa.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rastam (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. We join others in commending you and the delegation of Pakistan for your skilful and excellent stewardship of the Council during the month of May. We further commend you for the initiative of convening this meeting to discuss the efforts of the United Nations in promoting peace and security in Africa. Debate on this subject is most timely. We recognize the preoccupation of and importance attached by the Council to African issues, which take up some 60 per cent of its work. We welcome the Council's effort to refocus itself on the conflict situations in Africa, especially in light of recent tragic events there. We are very pleased that the Council adopted resolutions 1484 (2003) and 1485 (2003) this morning.

Peacekeeping constitutes an important instrument at the disposal of the Security Council. However, the Council must avoid selectivity and double standards in establishing United Nations peacekeeping operations, especially in Africa. Malaysia has contributed military and police personnel to most of the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, beginning with the first mission in the Congo in the early 1960s.

Strong commitment and continued and sustained support in terms of manpower, financing and material by United Nations Member States are essential in ensuring the operational success of peacekeeping operations. The effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping missions should not be jeopardized by a lack of necessary funding and adequate and well-trained and equipped personnel from Member States. The Council and the Secretariat should make every effort to engage Member States, particularly troop-contributing countries, at the planning stage and at every subsequent phase of any particular operation. We all know that dispatching peacekeeping missions at less than their required strength and with inadequate equipment can result in tragic consequences, as has been the experience in the case of some previous and current operations. What has happened in Ituri province is a clear example. The dispatch of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force in support of the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a very positive and timely response by the international community.

Beyond the deployment of peacekeeping missions in existing conflict situations, there is a need for the Council and the United Nations as a whole to develop effective strategies for the prevention of armed conflict and for post-conflict peace-building, including efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants in a post-conflict situation. Concrete measures must be taken to consolidate and sustain the peace. Malaysia associated itself closely with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) initiative during its membership of the Council in the years 1999 and 2000. We wish to reiterate our conviction that each and every component of the DDR process must be given due importance, equal emphasis and adequate funding to ensure success and the non-return of former combatants to conflict. Like all other United Nations programmes and activities, the problem of adequate funding in the effective implementation of the DDR programmes must be addressed. Generous support from the international community is critical, especially from those who have the means in terms of money and

technical expertise. The relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations must be fully involved in the post-conflict peace-building process. The private sector can certainly be encouraged to play an important role through reconstruction, investment and other relevant economic activities.

My delegation believes that there is a need for the Security Council — and the United Nations in general — to seriously and systematically address the root causes of conflict in ways that could minimize the potential for further and more protracted conflict and instability on the African continent. In that regard, we welcome the work of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/92. We sincerely hope that all the proposals made will be fully implemented. We also welcome the establishment of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. A comprehensive and integrated approach towards African issues and better coordination in that regard within the United Nations system, involving the principal organs — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat — United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, should be urgent priorities.

My delegation also wishes to underscore the important role that can be played by regional organizations, arrangements and agencies in the promotion of regional peace and security as well as economic and social development. Regional cooperation can be a key to the creation of a peaceful and cooperative environment. The institutional linkages and mechanisms of cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union and subregional organizations must be strengthened. We welcome the revival in the African Union of organs responsible for conflict prevention and resolution and all other initiatives being pursued by the African Union (AU) — including the Peace and Security Council of the AU — in the promotion of peace and security on the continent.

My delegation strongly supports the practice of dispatching Security Council missions to conflict areas, not only to supplement the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat, but also, and more important, to enable Council members to better appreciate the situation on the ground and the complexities of the problems that the Council must deal with. We welcome the forthcoming Council missions to Central Africa and West Africa early next month. We agree with the statement in your non-paper, Mr. President, that

> "... the two missions should be a powerful signal to all parties to the conflicts in Africa that the Council intends to maintain its focus on African issues and will remain actively engaged with Africa".

Indeed, that powerful signal should not be seen as coming only from the Security Council; it should also be regarded as a strong message from the entire United Nations membership. We note that similar missions undertaken in the past have proved valuable to the Council's work. Malaysia participated in the Council's mission to East Timor in 1999. We would recommend that such exercises be undertaken on a more regular basis in the future, not only to Africa but also to other regions. That would demonstrate the Council's continuing commitment to ensuring the engagement of the United Nations in the promotion of peace and security. We look forward to being informed of the findings and recommendations of those missions.

In addressing the issues at hand, we all know what the problems essentially are, what ought to be done and where the responsibilities lie. There is clearly a need for more serious commitment and action on the part of all concerned: the Security Council, the entire United Nations membership, the rest of the United Nations system, the international community at large and, above all, the parties in conflict. We must all do our utmost to assist in resolving current conflicts in Africa and preventing new ones from occurring. The key to that lies in political will: the will to take the necessary measures and to follow up on them. That political will to act and to deal with conflict situations should be demonstrated in an even-handed fashion wherever they occur, whether in Africa or elsewhere.

We are impressed with the incremental but tangible steps that have already been taken by African countries themselves. We believe that all their efforts must be supported by the international community. The Security Council can help in further encouraging and generating that support through its actions and decisions. This debate is another step in the right

direction. We commend you, Mr. President, and the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the delegation of Chile wishes to sincerely congratulate the Pakistani presidency on its excellent work in guiding the Security Council during this month of May and on the very timely choice of the theme "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security" for this wrap-up meeting.

For those of us who in recent months have been obliged to assess — not without anguish — the situation of a number of African countries that seem to be teetering unavoidably on a precipice of disintegration and violence, there could not be a more important theme than this one in the United Nations system. Without really knowing what to do, we have witnessed a macabre vicious circle marked by internal and external war; the dissolution of the authority and administrative capacity of the State; the gradual elimination of the economic and social potential of countries; the systematic violation of human rights; the existence of millions of refugees fleeing to countries that in turn are affected by grave economic crises; an increase in HIV/AIDS and in other epidemics and illnesses; the indiscriminate traffic in small arms and light weapons; the illegal exploitation of natural resources that finances such traffic; and, everywhere, hunger. And, amid that horror, we have witnessed the suffering of the weakest: the forced recruitment of children and the violation of rights that is suffered daily by African girls and women. The slow dissolution of colonial borders, the collapse of States and the emigration of the elite threaten the world with a humanitarian catastrophe that cannot fail to affect all of us.

We know full well that many others compiled that list of horrors before we did, and we are fearful and anguished at the lack of solutions. We sincerely hope that the dialogue that the Security Council missions undertake with political leaders in Central and West Africa will be translated into progress and effective commitments. However, we believe we must not harbour too many illusions. Experience shows that the exercise of finding out, listening and agreeing is insufficient if it is not accompanied by real and resolute political will to translate those experiences and exchanges into decisions and, later, into the implementation of stable and long-term policies.

Today, the Security Council is obliged to intervene in conflicts requiring urgent action by the international community — particularly in those whose dimensions and effects have a regional nature. The most illustrative cases are probably Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We cannot allow those situations to lead to tragedies such as those that we have witnessed in the past. Chile welcomes the commendable attitude of France and other countries that have offered troops to assist the small group of Uruguayans who make up the peace force in Bunia.

However, even if we are able to prevent the continuation of those tragedies, we need to assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms currently used by the United Nations so that we can move from a focus on conflict management to one on conflict prevention and support for the role of regional and subregional organizations in managing such situations.

The demobilization and reintegration processes, which have been referred to repeatedly in these discussions, must be maintained and further emphasized. As was stated this morning by Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa, the African Union and initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development are awaiting support from the Security Council to promote the common vision of peace and sustainable development for the region, which has brought so many African leaders together.

We have seen the main tasks in the area of peace and security carried out by the African Union and by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Sierra Leone in the past and today in Côte d'Ivoire. We also recognize the usefulness of, and the need for, the expansion and strengthening of coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. But that will not be sufficient unless the international financial organizations are also involved.

Conspiring against greater effectiveness of the mechanisms to which I referred earlier is, undoubtedly, a chronic shortage of resources. Greater investment by States with economic capacity in this area quite likely would benefit not only the local population but also, in future, the developed world, and would also help to avert greater migratory pressure than already exists.

Before concluding, let me say that we cannot fail to reflect on some of the underlying causes of the African conflicts. Underpinning each of our discussions on national cases is the issue of poverty and extreme underdevelopment in the region. There is no doubt that much bloodshed could be prevented and money saved if developed countries spearheaded a programme open to the entire international community aimed at intervening economically in those countries, providing them with appropriate technical experts, monitoring their economic decisions, generating investments and opening wide their doors to exports.

The promotion of national cases that have been successful in the area of development might have a very positive ripple effect in the region and enable it to emerge from the situation it is now in. But to that end political will is required. Political will means, for example, the reduction of subsidies to agricultural products that are presently in force in the markets of the rich countries. Political will means, for example, forgiving Africa's external debt. Measures such as these might be even more effective in alleviating poverty in Africa.

In this regard, we welcome the initiatives which many Governments have developed. We deem it important to highlight the initiative of the Government of the United States, and those of other countries, decisively to combat the AIDS epidemic in the continent. We hope that this is but one example of many more such examples in future that will contribute to the well-being of millions of African citizens.

The very credibility of our Organization once again is being put to the test in this African crisis. The United Nations must act. Our country is prepared to participate in all of the collective efforts launched and sacrifices made by the international community in this area.

The President: I thank Ambassador Valdés for the kind words he addressed to the Pakistan presidency.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish warmly to thank you, Sir, for having selected this issue for this wrap-up discussion. We feel that it is a very important issue and that it is quite timely, in view of the upcoming Security Council missions to Africa.

As Greece will be speaking on behalf of the European Union after my delegation has spoken, and in order to be brief, as is required for our statements today, we will limit ourselves to expressing our views on four points which, in my delegation's view, are of particular importance given the fact that these missions are about to take place — missions in which we will be involved.

First, I will touch on the subregional dimension, which is of extreme importance in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa. We believe that subregional initiatives must have the support of the international community. In this regard, we are pleased to note the increasingly important role played by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in West Africa, and in particular its active participation in the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

We also have noted with interest the revitalization of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) in the context of the conflict in the Central African Republic. We also believe that it is important to revitalize the forum established by the Mano River Union, which could play a very important role in promoting confidence-building measures among its three member countries.

It is also encouraging to note at the regional level that the African Union is prepared to play an active role in managing and resolving conflicts, as can be seen in the mission now deployed in Burundi to supervise the ceasefire and to demobilize the rebel groups on a voluntary basis.

Secondly, the humanitarian situation is an integral part of conflicts and not a subsidiary or auxiliary one. It is essential for humanitarian questions to play a central role in the resolution phase of conflicts because, unfortunately, the repercussions of the complex conflicts taking place in Africa very dramatically affect civilian populations. My delegation would reiterate that it is unacceptable that in many cases the various warring factions do not allow humanitarian organizations access to the civilian population.

Thirdly, respect for human rights is a fundamental issue and is also related to the question of how to address the question of responsibility for violations of human rights in the resolution phase of a conflict. We deem impunity to be unacceptable. Only by establishing adequate mechanisms which ensure just treatment of this issue can progress be made in reconciliation, which is one of the greatest challenges for societies emerging from conflict.

Fourthly, and lastly, let me turn to the post-conflict phase. It is important for the Security Council to pay due attention to this phase, since its fragility is one of the greatest challenges facing those African States which have been able to emerge from conflict.

In many cases, this post-conflict phase takes place in a regional framework characterized by other conflicts and by the presence of destabilizing factors such as arms trafficking, the presence of mercenaries or the problem of refugees. It is very important, therefore, for the international community to follow up this post-conflict phase very closely, providing the required political and financial support.

In this regard, we welcome the increasingly close cooperation between the Council and the Economic and Social Council in establishing ad hoc groups, and we endorse the comments to this effect that were made this morning by Special Adviser Gambari.

To conclude, we express our gratitude once again for the choice of this issue for today's meeting. We are confident that the practical conclusions that we reach today will be integrated into the missions and that the principal recommendations of the missions will receive adequate follow-up from the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Spain for her kind words addressed to the Pakistan delegation.

I now call on the representative of Greece. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Daratzikis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area Iceland declare that they align themselves with this statement.

The European Union firmly believes that the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa constitutes one of the major challenges of the international community at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In this regard, we recognize the importance of the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

The management of the intra-State and inter-State conflicts that still plague significant parts of the African continent and assistance to African countries emerging from such conflict situations, should, in our view, be among the highest priorities of the United Nations system. In that connection, the European Union strongly supports the action taken by the United Nations, in particular by the Security Council, in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building.

The establishment by the Security Council of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the Economic and Social Council's establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict, together with the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, have provided useful mechanisms to address the multiple needs of those countries. At the same time, those actions indicate that there is an interactive relationship between security and development, as both are indispensable for the achievement of peace and sustainable development. The European Union welcomes the continued involvement of the international financial institutions in this process. They have an essential role to play in consolidating peace in countries emerging from conflict and in supporting efforts towards long-term growth and development.

Identifying and addressing the multidimensional root causes of conflicts in Africa is another important element in the long fight for peace and stability in the region. Dealing with issues such as socio-economic inequities and inequalities, systematic ethnic discrimination, the denial of human rights, disputes over political participation or long-standing grievances over land, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons and the illegal exploitation of natural resources is of critical importance in the process of moving from conflict management to prevention and final resolution. In our view, the existence of appropriate and effective mechanisms and institutions, including good governance and rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and addressing fundamental inequities, are of great importance for the early prevention of conflicts and a durable peace in the continent.

The European Union believes that a comprehensive approach to the root causes of conflicts in Africa would also benefit from enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies. In that regard, we look forward to having a fruitful discussion at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, where item 40 (b) of the preliminary agenda provides the appropriate framework for further inputs to emerge.

The European Union considers that the two upcoming Security Council missions to the region will serve as a pointed reminder of the acute interest and engagement of the international community in Africa, especially at a time when conflicts in certain parts seem to be intensifying and even spreading to neighbouring countries. The missions will also contribute to the Council's better understanding of the complex situations at hand and offer a valuable opportunity for interaction with the various players on the ground.

Within the framework of the Europe-Africa dialogue, we have been working together to develop common approaches to this issue. The Cairo Summit's follow-up has indeed been showing our mutual commitment to this endeavour.

The European Union has been constant in its support of the efforts for regional and subregional cooperation and has been actively engaged in various relevant initiatives aimed at enhancing peacekeeping capacities in Africa. We encourage a close relationship between the United Nations and the African Union and subregional organizations, inter alia, the Economic Community of West African States, and we commend the recent efforts of those organizations in the area of peacekeeping operations in Africa.

The European Union also welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat's Department of Peacekeeping Operations to work closely with all relevant actors in Africa at the regional, subregional and national levels, in particular for the enhancement of the capabilities of troop contributors and in capacity-building for regional and subregional organizations. We welcome an active role for the United Nations, specifically in the areas of information-sharing, promoting transparency, mobilizing support and stimulating contacts between recipients and donors of assistance, for example, in training, equipment and logistics.

The establishment of the African Union was a particularly important development for the African continent. It has created new opportunities for strengthened economic cooperation, political partnership and cultural exchange between our two continents.

The European Union strongly welcomes the firm commitment of the African Union to peace and security. The decision taken at the African Union summit in Durban in July 2002 to establish an African Peace and Security Council and an African standby force for conducting peace support operations is a decisive and forward-looking step. The European Union considers that its implementation, including the swift ratification of the protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council in order to ensure its timely entry into force, would be a major achievement by the African Union member States. The European Union stands ready to continue its support geared towards strengthening African conflict prevention and resolution capabilities, in particular at the continental and regional levels.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that, in an emerging new age of political and economic development in Africa, the European Union will continue to contribute to Africa in as many sectors as possible and in every possible way, including through improved cooperation here at the United Nations, where the issue of promoting peace and security in Africa must continue to receive the highest level of priority and urgency.

The President: I thank the representative of Greece for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Uruguay. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The serious problems affecting the African continent must be a matter of concern for all regions of the world. They require the utmost attention from all of our Governments, and they should be an absolute priority on the agendas of international organizations.

We must undertake concerted and energetic action to assist our brothers in Africa to overcome the enormous obstacles that are impeding, and even paralyzing, their efforts to achieve economic development and democratization. Some of those

obstacles are the result of centuries of being subjected to colonial rule, while others have resulted from long-standing rivalries. Yet others stem from extreme poverty and the precarious social conditions prevailing in some regions of the continent. It is a moral duty to assist Africa. If we do not carry out that duty, the rest of the world will not be at peace with itself.

I wish to reiterate Uruguay's solidarity with all the Governments and peoples of Africa, in particular with those experiencing crises at this moment. We have proven our solidarity by having participated for years in peacekeeping missions in a number of countries, including Mozambique, Angola, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eritrea, Western Sahara and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The tragic events that have taken place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have gained notoriety in recent days. Uruguay has been a part of the United Nations peacekeeping force in that country from the very beginning, with a contingent that currently numbers more than 1,600 men. Among other things, it was a naval unit from Uruguay that opened up navigation and river communications in the Congo River basin, which had been interrupted for over three years.

I would like to convey to the members of the Security Council the great concern of the Government and people of Uruguay over the delicate situation in which over 700 of our compatriots find themselves in Bunia, where Uruguay agreed to have part of its troops transferred in spite of the extreme danger in the region. Uruguay has no economic interest in the area, or in the Congo in general. Its presence in this unhappy country is in keeping with moral principles and with putting solidarity into action.

The situation of the civilian population and of the Uruguayan forces in Bunia is simply terrible. On the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe, and likely at any moment to become the victims of unbridled and mindless violence on the part of warring factions, the lives of the inhabitants of Bunia and of the Uruguayans attempting to protect them have become a nightmare that has now lasted for several weeks.

The Security Council has just adopted a desperately awaited resolution providing for the deployment of an Emergency Multinational Force to Bunia. Uruguay would like to express its gratitude to the Council for having done so. I would also like to thank the Governments of the countries that have expressed their readiness to participate in the Emergency Force, as well as to the Secretariat for its efforts aimed at expediting the preparation and deployment of the Force.

On behalf of my Government and of Uruguayans whose lives and physical and mental integrity are currently seriously under threat in Bunia, and on behalf of all of Uruguay, I urge that measures be adopted immediately to implement that resolution and to proceed to the deployment of the Emergency Force to Bunia as soon as possible, so as to restore calm, provide security for the population and protect everyone's lives. Any delay may be fatal for the inhabitants of Bunia and for members of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as — it must be said — for the credibility and prestige of the Organization.

Mr. Boubacar Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to express my delegation's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for the determination, skill and mastery with which you have guided the work of the Security Council during the month of May. I would also like to thank you for having organized this wrap-up meeting on the theme "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security". This very timely meeting it taking place as this body is preparing to send two missions to Africa next month — to Central Africa and to Western Africa, two subregions shaken by ongoing conflicts that are seriously threatening the peace and stability of the countries in those regions.

In his opening statement this morning, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Africa, provided a clear indication of the stakes involved in the task ahead, as well as of its scope. He also made some suggestions as to how to improve upon our approach, for which my delegation is grateful to him.

Our decision to send missions to Central and Western Africa leaves no room for doubt about our desire to contribute to the establishment of peace and development in these sensitive areas of the continent. It is up to us to benefit from those missions by making the necessary contacts at the governmental level and with political leaders and the civilian populations, so that we may have an objective view of the situations

and their consequences and be able to refine our methods of work to find appropriate solutions to the various situations involved. The victims of conflict desperately need this. They aspire only to calm and security in order to focus their energies on improving their welfare.

However, the Council cannot fully shoulder its responsibilities unless it acts with the utmost intelligence with regional and subregional actors, whose importance and usefulness in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts no longer needs to be demonstrated. That is why during our visits we must take due note of the regional dimension, listen closely to the points of view expressed by the various actors and take a comprehensive approach in order to contribute to a just and lasting settlement of the conflicts.

In addition, my delegation would like to point out that supporting the peace process necessarily requires strengthening peacekeeping missions. In that regard, we area pleased with the decisions taken by the Council to establish a United Nations mission in Côte d'Ivoire and to authorize the deployment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Furthermore, as a number of speakers have pointed out, the Council must not lose sight of the thorny issue of the proliferation and illegal circulation of light weapons, which further fuels such hotbeds of tension. A clear message must be sent by the two Council missions to all who are involved in that scourge, which is detrimental to the return to peace. Combating mercenary activities, which are developing at an alarming rate in West Africa, must not be overlooked, either.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reaffirm its profound conviction that the Council missions remain useful and very important exercises. It is our duty to ensure that they are further invigorated so that they can be more effective instruments in the service of international peace and security.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Africa represents the conscience of the world and its promising future. Africa stands for purity; it is the symbol of giving. On its vast land numerous races have come together, and through the determined efforts of its peoples it has helped to enrich the human heritage. On the basis of that understanding, my delegation extends its profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to your brotherly delegation, for having convened this important meeting. We would also like to thank Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his important statement.

We are deeply saddened to see a number of the States of Africa plagued by conflicts, many of which have been imposed upon them. Some of those conflicts have been raging for many years and have had unprecedented repercussions at the political, security, economic, social and humanitarian levels. Peace and security for the continent and its States are long overdue; Africa should no longer be punished for its rich endowment with natural resources and for its racial and ethnic diversity.

In spite of efforts made at a number of levels to resolve the problems faced by Africa, the desired results have not been achieved. We would like from the outset to reaffirm our belief that the international community should pay greater attention to Africa and should make a concerted effort to assist it in its development and to rehabilitate it after the destruction of the past few decades.

In recent years, the Security Council has spared no effort in trying to tackle the crises that have engulfed certain African countries. In an attempt to deal with these crises, the Council has established 12 missions to support or establish peace in various States on that continent. The Council's adoption this morning of a resolution to dispatch a multinational emergency force to the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is further evidence of its active follow-up of the developments in the countries of that continent.

Such attention on the part of the Council can be placed within the context of interest shown by the other bodies of the United Nations. The General Assembly has made a notable effort, in particular by adopting the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The Economic and Social Council has also made a significant effort, and we must not forget the very important role played by Secretary-General Kofi Annan personally or through his special envoys and personal representatives in the region, to try to reconcile differing points of view and put an end to

conflict and military confrontation with a view to enabling the parties to implement the accords arrived at and the resolutions of the Council.

Despite such measures to resolve conflict and build peace, we believe that the international effort must be given further impetus. The Security Council recently dispatched missions to several States, including in southern Africa, East Africa and the Great Lakes region. The positive results of those missions have been reflected in the subsequent development of events. In this regard, we hope that the two forthcoming Council missions to Central and West Africa will be able to discharge the mandates assigned to them so that the desired results can be achieved.

Direct meetings between the members of the two missions and the leaders of about 12 States suffering from, or directly or indirectly involved in, such conflicts will be beneficial. The leaders of those States and the leaders of rival organizations must heed the call of the international community to end all forms of destruction and to all hostilities. This will be especially beneficial if accompanied by a firm stance with regard to those who circumvent the resolutions of international legitimacy or are reluctant to implement such resolutions.

Syria welcomed the establishment of the African Union and the start of work by its subsidiary bodies. It also supports the efforts being made by the Union to settle conflicts in Africa. We acknowledge in particular the role of the presidency of the African Union, South Africa, in this regard. We also welcome regional and subregional efforts to resolve conflicts in the States of that continent, especially the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, as well as those of other regional organizations, such as the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Syria calls upon the international community to enhance the material capabilities of African regional organizations so that they can effectively discharge their mandates. Experience has shown that we need to deal with African conflicts holistically and on a broad regional basis, given the fact that most neighbouring States are involved in the causes of the conflicts and need to be involved in the solutions. In this regard, we welcome the significant role played by the leaders of the African States to organize and mediate meetings with the goal of settling conflicts peacefully and of rebuilding mutual confidence and relations among States.

We reaffirm the need to deal with the root causes of conflict in Africa. We greatly appreciate the importance of the work of the Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the need to put its recommendations into effect. A vital role should also be played by the international donor bodies and organizations, whose assistance in the reconstruction in Africa is of great importance.

As a member of the Security Council, Syria has sought to focus close attention on the problems facing Africa. Syria has called upon the international community in the past, and calls upon it today, to spare no effort to put an end to the conflicts ravaging numerous African States. We earnestly hope that, together, we will manage to fulfil the promise we made to Africa to help it to overcome its difficulties and continue to enrich human civilization and human progress.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Philippines. On behalf of the Council, I welcome him to the United Nations. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): It is my pleasure to address the Security Council for the first time and my honour to do so under Pakistan's presidency and on an issue that is central to the work of the Council.

My delegation is likewise pleased to congratulate you, Sir, and your team on Pakistan's outstanding leadership of the Council this month, highlighted by the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003). We also congratulate Mexico on its commendable presidency last month.

My delegation also wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gambari for his statement this morning.

This Security Council meeting is timely, coming as it does two days before the G-8 summit to be chaired by France, which will address the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as one of its themes. It is also important coming on the eve of the

two Security Council missions to Central and West Africa, to be led by France and the United Kingdom, respectively.

In recent weeks, the Security Council has demonstrated its unswerving commitment to safeguarding peace and security in Africa. The adoption of resolution 1479 (2003), which established the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, and this morning's adoption of resolution 1484 (2003) authorizing the deployment of a temporary Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia under the leadership of France, speak significantly loud and clear of the Council's determination to directly address conflicts in Africa.

The response of the Security Council to the Ivorian and Bunia crises and the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in facilitating the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire and of the troop-contributing countries in the establishment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia are examples of cooperation which bear highlighting.

In this context, my delegation proposes the following, which we believe will further strengthen the resolution of conflicts in Africa.

First, Security Council partnership with regional groups in Africa, notably ECOWAS and the African Union, should be fully harnessed. In particular, the newly established African Union Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution offers rich resources to complement the efforts of the Council in conflict resolution.

Secondly, Security Council missions to conflict areas have contributed to a better understanding of the issues. They have been useful in facilitating the peace process and should be carried out with increased collaboration with relevant regional groups on the ground. In this context, my delegation strongly supports the regional approach of the Council in dealing with specific conflicts in Africa through the forthcoming Council missions. We hope that these missions will be successful in accomplishing their objectives.

Thirdly, an integrated approach that will bring together all relevant United Nations actors involved in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction should be consistently adopted in dealing with conflict situations in Africa. We welcome the trend towards strengthened cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in this area. In this regard, my delegation wishes to note the success of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. Other mechanisms, such as the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the Group of Friends and the special representatives of the Secretary-General can also contribute to this integrated approach.

We believe that the Africans themselves have the capacity to play the key role in promoting peace and security in their region, and the international community should support them in these efforts. Through the promotion of peace and security in Africa, the economic development and progress of the region are also enhanced.

Finally, important as conflict resolution may be, my delegation emphasizes the need to focus and develop appropriate conflict-prevention strategies as priority measures to promote peace and security in Africa and in all regions, for that matter.

The President: I thank the representative of the Philippines for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Now that your presidency of the Security Council for this month is drawing to an end, Sir, allow me to express my delegation's satisfaction with the outstanding manner in which you have carried out your noble mission and to pay tribute to your skills and competence.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by the representative of the sisterly Republic of the Congo, who, with his customary clarity and eloquence, gave, on behalf of the countries of the Economic Community of Central African States, an outline of developments in our community in the area of peace and security. My delegation will therefore limit its statement to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While we sincerely thank the Security Council for keeping the situation in our country among its priorities, we take this opportunity also to express our

gratitude for this morning's unanimous response to the request of the Secretary-General to deploy as soon as possible a multinational force in Bunia with a view to helping a return to normalcy in Ituri, a district of Orientale province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that has been stricken, for the second time in just a few months, by the misdeeds of the forces of evil. Orchestrated by two neighbouring countries, the events in Bunia are strikingly similar to those we have seen in Kisangani, where the regular armies of those same two countries clashed on several occasions with heavy weapons, claiming thousands of victims. The sheer numbers of callous warlords in Ituri, like those further south in the provinces of Nord-Kivu, Sud-Kivu and Maniema, are of such great concern that some are now even talking about the "Somalization" of that part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Worse still, the atrocities enable us to draw a certain parallel to other events, such as those carried out about 10 years ago in Rwanda, where a terrible genocide occurred. Broadcasts by Thomas Lubanga's Radio Candip remind us quite starkly of those aired by Radio Mille Collines of such sad memory.

Ituri is but one symptom of the general situation in the country. Recent massacres there compound a long and macabre list of massive violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law since the outbreak of the war of aggression on 2 August 1998. Ituri is just a new catastrophe in the Congolese tragedy. There are hundreds of verified deaths, thousands of internally displaced persons and thousands of people living in subhuman conditions in and around MONUC areas, where they are seeking refuge under the protection of Uruguayan troops, who have done excellent work. My delegation cannot fail to recall that members of the international community have paid a heavy price. Two representatives of the Red Cross and two MONUC officers, far from their families, fully committed to the cause of returning peace and dignity to our country, were savagely murdered. Their bodies were found mutilated beyond what one can imagine.

In the light of all those atrocities, it is important that the international community's message not be hampered by ambiguity. The message must be made clear, and the Security Council must send a strong signal to those who commit such atrocities. For example, those responsible for the murders committed on 14 and 15 May 2002 in Kisangani — whose names are in official United Nations reports — are still moving about freely and continue to attend to their business. In such cases, how can a potential violator of human rights and of international humanitarian law not feel safe to commit another crime if he knows beforehand that, after committing it, not only will he go unpunished, but perhaps he might even benefit from a minor perquisite or a bonus, granted on the altar of peace.

That is the case with Thomas Lubanga, a former inmate of the central prison of Makala, in Kinshasa, and a well-known criminal and terrorist. Are we to consider him for what he really is — I repeat, a criminal — or are we to lay out the red carpet for him? At a time when the Security Council is resolutely committed to the stabilization of Ituri and, therefore, of the entire Democratic Republic of the Congo and the whole Great Lakes region, Ituri will undoubtedly be an important test of the will of the nation and of the international community.

In the context of the partnership that has fortunately been forged among the Security Council, the African Union and the parties involved or interested in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council has taken the initiative of dispatching a mission to the region on a regular basis. We note with satisfaction that every Council mission visit has given rise to notable progress in the peace process. We are convinced that the same will apply to the mission to Central Africa, which we will have the signal honour to host in a few days' time in Kinshasa. The challenges are immense, certainly, but they are not insurmountable.

In the immediate future, particular emphasis should be placed on the implementation of the transition and on the completion of the ongoing peace process. The cessation of hostilities throughout the national territory -- more particularly in the east — is crucial in order to enable the Transitional Government to establish its authority, in conformity with the relevant Security Council resolutions with the Lusaka Agreement and with other subsequent partial agreements.

The reforms envisaged by the Transitional Constitution deserve to be supported. Reform of the army — a crucial attribute of the sovereignty and defence of national territory — must be supported and accelerated, particularly in the context of the swift formation of an inclusive and republican army. Reform

of the judicial system, for its part, should be a priority so that we can deal with the thorny question of the administration of justice and impunity. The millions of Congolese men and women who have suffered grievously from armed aggression and from atrocities committed by warlords are demanding justice. They cannot be denied it.

The Ituri Pacification Commission's resolutions also deserve to be supported unreservedly. They must be fully implemented. However, it should be pointed out that the tasks of pacification, reconciliation and respect for law and order are functions that belong to a governmental entity. Therefore, the capacities of the Transitional Government deserve to be strengthened to that effect.

In the short and medium term, the concepts of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR) should be rethought if we wish them to be truly effective. Naturally, they should pertain to the groups mentioned in the annexes to the Lusaka Agreement, but they should also extend to those that were created recently, some of which are fighting in Ituri. It is also essential to create a viable mechanism to halt the circulation of small arms and light weapons, which creates situations of instability, veritable breeding grounds for all kinds of criminal, organized crime and terrorist networks. In that connection, we followed with much interest the views expressed this afternoon by the delegations of Germany, Bulgaria and Guinea.

We must also put an end to the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Such resources are ultimately a curse for the countries that by chance possess them. Those countries, including ours, are extremely poor and represent nearly all of the world's conflicts. In parallel, it would be useful to combine the region's various peace processes in a comprehensive approach. The Arusha process, for Burundi, is well under way and seems to be on the right path. The Lusaka process, for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is irreversible. We hope that both processes succeed and that a free and democratic space is created. That will be good for the Great Lakes region. Then it will be important that the region's two other countries take into account the efforts undoubtedly being undertaken with a view to genuine democracy, reconciliation and national harmony.

Over the long term, the organization and convening of an international conference on peace and security in the Great Lakes region is becoming an absolute necessity. Such a conference, from our point of view, would be the most viable forum for laying the foundations for new relations marked by respect and trust among the region's countries. Once peace is restored, Congolese men and women will not fail to share with the world their vision of what they intend to accomplish for the happiness of present and future generations. We hope to share and to realize our dream with the assistance of you, the members of the international community.

Before I conclude, my delegation would like to ask the Security Council to be so kind as to express to the Secretary-General our gratitude for his tireless efforts to restore peace in our country. We are grateful to him for his recent initiative and take this opportunity to sincerely thank, again through you, Mr. President, all the countries that decided to respond favourably to it in one form or another. These thanks for the Council's tireless and unfailing commitment to the Congolese people will be reiterated in several days' time by the Republic's most authorized spokesman.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this wrap-up meeting to discuss Security Council missions to Africa and United Nations promotion of peace and security in Africa. We also wish to thank Ambassador Gambari, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his statement.

Recently, the situation in Central Africa — particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — has become extremely worrisome; the peace process there faces a number of challenges. In West Africa, the peace in Sierra Leone must still be consolidated, the conflict in Liberia has yet to be resolved and the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is still beset with destabilizing factors. The Security Council missions to those two regions in June are both necessary and timely. We hope that they will play an effective role in promoting the peace processes in both regions.

In recent years, the Security Council has been actively engaged in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in the consolidation of peace. It has made some headway, but it has also faced difficulties and

problems. Today I wish to dwell on one question, namely, the importance of putting the maintenance of peace and security on a sound economic and financial footing.

The African continent is richly endowed with natural resources. This is true of both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone. However, due to various factors, economic and financial security often becomes a sticking point in the process of ending conflicts and rebuilding peace.

Indeed, the inability to procure adequate economic and financial resources has a negative effect on the promotion of peace processes. In this respect, it should be noted that, in recent years, cooperation between the United Nations and international financial institutions, including the World Bank, has been stepped up, and that coordination among various organs of the United Nations system — for instance, between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — has also been enhanced.

Insufficient funding during peace processes remains a difficult problem. For example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through its peacekeeping operation in Côte d'Ivoire, has played an instrumental role in stabilizing the situation in the country. However, the peacekeeping operation is strapped for cash. In Sierra Leone, the process of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants has been stalled by the lack of funding.

Following the end of conflicts and the achievement of peace, countries still face serious difficulties, which may become new triggers for a further round of turmoil. For example, in Guinea-Bissau the relevant peace agreements are being implemented, but the grave economic difficulties it faces threaten to plunge it into another war.

Economic and financial guarantees therefore represent a serious issue for the Security Council in its task of preventing and managing and forestalling the recurrence of conflicts in Africa.

The United Nations, including the Security Council, should strive for effective solutions to enable the Organization to enhance its capacity for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I thank Ambassador Wang Yingfan for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the President of the Security Council for putting forward for consideration at this month's wrap-up meeting of the Council the topic of conflicts in Africa, with a view to the dispatch to that continent of two Council missions. Our discussions have made clear the great practicality and usefulness of such an action. The exchange of views that took place today will certainly help members of the Security Council in their work during the course of their trip to Africa.

Russia agrees with the general conviction as to the link between peace and development. We support the elaboration of a comprehensive and thorough approach to the settlement and prevention of conflicts and to the elimination of poverty, with a view to ensuring development and the strengthening of democracy on the African continent. We believe that priority should be accorded to the use of political and diplomatic methods and to the overcoming of obstacles that could contribute to the emergence and continuation of conflicts. There can be no doubt that the Africans themselves must play a key role in this respect.

Russia is actively participating in peacekeeping efforts in Africa; Russian representatives are involved in all United Nations peacekeeping operations on the continent.

Africa has not been spared new challenges and threats. It is important that in its approach to these problems, the Security Council act with the same determination and serious-mindedness as it does in other regions. Double standards are inadmissible. This idea has already been expressed in this Chamber by the representative of Malaysia, and we support it.

The planned Security Council missions will have to cope with and evaluate a fresh threat to the African continent: the spread of illegal armed groups. Often these groups pose a threat to the constitutional foundation, and even the very existence, of sovereign States. This was stated eloquently earlier in the meeting by the representative of the Congo, Mr. Ikouebe.

In many cases, these groups have no programme whatsoever, save their desire to seize power at any cost. The price for this can be many tens of thousands of peaceful African lives. Since these groups plunder and rape and kill the civilian population, how do they differ from terrorists? Today's statement by the

Permanent Representative of Burundi, Mr. Nteturuye, shows that the Africans themselves hold such views.

Quite frequently armed groups are manipulated from abroad and become an extension of the interests of neighbouring countries. This phenomenon has become regional in nature, and poses a threat to international peace and security. With a view to averting the worst-case scenario, Governments must engage in contacts with these armed groups and make compromises within the framework of an intra-national dialogue. This is explainable and understandable, and each situation requires individual consideration. Nevertheless, such an approach leads to the legalization of the rebels and to a situation whereby, instead of resorting to constitutional means of resolving internal problems, a choice is made in favour of violence.

The question of border security requires a fresh approach. For historical reasons, African borders have always been porous. This has allowed them to retain the ethnic linkages of tribes and has helped in border cooperation.

Now, however, the permeability and vulnerability of borders has in many cases become the reason for the spillover of conflict situations, unrestricted flows of illegal arms, smuggling, trans-border crime, the illegal export of natural resources and the movement of armed groups and mercenaries.

The Security Council missions should draw attention to this problem, which could lead to further destabilization in various African regions. Russia supports the efforts undertaken by the United Nations to strengthen Africa's peacekeeping potential and the establishment of an effective partnership and of cooperation in the area of the maintenance of peace.

Of great promise is cooperation among the African peacekeeping structures with the Group of Eight. We agree with the views expressed in this regard by the Ambassador of Germany, Ambassador Pleuger. We note with satisfaction the intensification of peacekeeping efforts on the part of the African Union and such subregional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD).

We welcome the major contribution to peacekeeping made by a great number of African States. However, we are concerned that, in some cases, the assessments of the Security Council and African institutions do not coincide. As well, the requests of our partners in Africa do not always find support on the Council.

In that connection, we agree with the proposal made by the Chairman of the Group of African States, the Permanent Representative of Mauritius, Mr. Koonjul, to hold consultations between the Security Council and the African Union. We support the views expressed by the representative of Angola, Mr. Gaspar Martins, on cooperation with subregional organizations. We should heed the view of the Economic Community of Central African States on the mandate for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as expressed today by the representative of the Republic of the Congo, Mr. Ikouebe.

A number of delegations referred today to sanctions as a way of dealing with those who violate international peace and security. Sanctions are a very powerful weapon, and sanctions regimes can be imposed by the Security Council alone. Such regimes are inadmissible when, as one group of United Nations experts recently reported, those targeted are unaware they are the object of sanctions. The Security Council must carefully follow up on the implementation of its own resolutions. During its trip to West Africa, the Security Council will be able to see to what extent its sanctions regimes have been effective in the case of certain States of the region.

The Security Council regularly examines post-conflict recovery situations in various African States. We are concerned about the gaps and complications that have arisen in some cases: the military coup in the Central African Republic and difficulties in the post-conflict process in Guinea-Bissau. We hope that in the latter case the Security Council mission will be able to make a constructive contribution to a smooth continuation of that process. We believe that the Security Council missions to Central and West Africa will be able to get a first-hand view of the humanitarian situation in conflict zones.

The information coming in shows that in those areas, there exists heinous, merciless cruelty towards the civilian population. Senseless killings are being

carried out with machetes, which have become a weapon of mass destruction. We are observing a phenomenon that is incompatible with civilization in the twenty-first century. Child combatants are drawn into endless violence. Security Council missions must send a clear signal to the parties concerned: those who commit crimes against humanity will inexorably be brought to justice. The guilty will be punished for the crimes they have committed. We support the statement in that regard from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Ileka. The blood and ashes of innocent victims make this our duty.

Virtually all African conflicts have a regional dimension. The positions of neighbours and other regional factors to a great extent determine the success or failure of international efforts to settle those conflicts. Russia proposes that during the Security Council mission to Central Africa we sound out the views of the States of the Great Lakes region on the idea of adopting a declaration on good neighbourliness, which could then be transformed into a good-neighbourliness pact. As we see it, work on such a document would promote mutual understanding among the States in that part of the African continent, help to solve ongoing problems and strengthen trust among the States. It could be an important step in preparing for the international conference on the Great Lakes region.

There are no quick fixes for the enormous problems of settling African conflicts. We need multifaceted, painstaking efforts both from the friends of Africa and, first and foremost, from Africans themselves. We hope that the forthcoming Security Council missions to the continent, in accordance with the mandates approved, will help to formulate solutions to those conflicts and to face new challenges and threats to Africa.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamanzi (Rwanda): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you, Mr. President, my sincere thanks for convening this important meeting on peace and conflict in Africa. I would also like to congratulate you on the remarkable job done by the Security Council in the course of the month of May, during your tenure. Moreover, my delegation expresses its high appreciation for the assessment and recommendations made this morning by Ambassador Gambari. My delegation also fully endorses the statement made by the representative of the Congo on behalf of Central African countries on the evolution of the pacification process in the area.

These last months have witnessed the awful and sad events that took place in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where numerous innocent civilians were disgracefully massacred or forced into displacement and subsequent misery. Those events happened at a time when the Congolese had just agreed upon a political framework for putting in place transitional structures aimed at achieving long-lasting peace and security for the people of the country and for the neighbouring countries.

The magnitude of those events requires that the international community provide unconditional support to all the Congolese parties in this process towards achieving durable peace. A substantial commitment from the international community is indeed needed to help the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to build trust among themselves and to strive for national unity.

In this regard, the Government of Rwanda appreciates Secretary-General Kofi Annan's noteworthy initiative of carrying out consultations for the deployment of a neutral multinational force, whose main mission is to bring relief to the population of Ituri and to prevent a further humanitarian catastrophe in the region.

Those populations have indeed been suffering as a result of the chaotic and unsafe situation favoured by the absence of the appropriate dynamic in implementing the Lusaka and Pretoria political frameworks. The Government of Rwanda advocates that the multinational force be a strong support for the pacification process without interfering with the Lusaka and Pretoria frameworks, which constitute a pivotal reference for the restoration of durable peace and security for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for all the other countries in the Great Lakes region.

The Government of Rwanda also welcomes the forthcoming mission of the Security Council to Central Africa, which is to take place in the course of June. This is a crucial step in giving impetus to the pacification process taking place in the countries of the Great Lakes region, especially in the Democratic

Republic of the Congo and Burundi. The mission should seek to help the Congolese protagonists to identify ways and means to overcome the outstanding impediments to putting in place national and integrated transitional structures. A strong appeal to the various Congolese parties, especially the Government in place in Kinshasa, to show more political will and openness would be very valuable in rescuing the good results achieved so far through the remarkable regional and international peace initiatives undertaken for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As far as Burundi is concerned, the Government of Rwanda would like to express its wish to see the Security Council mission contribute to strengthening the mechanisms for the implementation of the Arusha peace accords so as to achieve a speedy restoration of peace all over the territory of Burundi. Recommendations regarding the African mission in Burundi should be made in the vein of consolidating its efficiency on the ground for the utmost security and good of the people of Burundi.

The President: I thank the representative of Rwanda for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. President, for the excellent manner in which Pakistan and you yourself have guided the work of the Security Council during the month of May. You proposed an agenda that took into account the varied interests of the Security Council with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

During their respective presidencies of the Council, many delegations have initiated important thematic debates. That has made possible an exchange of views and a broadening of the concept of international peace and security. The outcome of those various discussions should serve the Council as a reference in approaching the issues it takes up. The fact that several non-members of the Council take part in this exhaustive exercise is a positive sign that the Council should take advantage of.

The relevance of the theme put forth by the President for the Council's discussion today should also be highlighted, especially as it enables us to consider as much as possible tension and conflict situations in their regional and subregional contexts and to ensure that there is greater interaction between the Council and subregional actors in the quest for solutions to problems.

It is reassuring to note that conflicts in Africa are the subject of constant follow-up by the Security Council, and that sustained and sincere efforts are being made by all members to alleviate as much as possible the political, economic and social ills that afflict our continent. However, it is important that the Council's commitment to Africa be enhanced even further. It would perhaps be appropriate for the Council to occasionally carry out an evaluation — as it is doing today — of its own actions with regard to ongoing and increasingly complicated African conflicts in order to lay out the real problems and, if necessary, explore new avenues that may provide the most favourable solutions for those problems.

The missions to be carried out by the Security Council to two African regions next month are in several respects innovative initiatives. They are to be welcomed, as they make possible direct involvement in helping the parties to conflicts to negotiate a peaceful and speedy solution to their disputes.

The recognition of the interdependence of the situations in the Central and Western African subregions, as well as of the role played by the African Union and other African participants, is a good illustration of the way in which we should proceed so that Council may effectively become aware of subregional machinery falling within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter. In developing their relations, the United Nations and the African Union have already established machinery for consultation and cooperation aimed at improving the joint efforts of the two organizations, in particular in the areas of maintaining peace and preventing conflict. In that regard, it is important to emphasize that the efforts and initiatives to be carried out should be based on parameters established by African States themselves in pursuance of the principles and objectives of the African Union and in close cooperation with the Security Council.

Similarly, and given the fact that the activities of the United Nations and of the African Union complement each another in the maintenance of peace and in preventing conflict, we believe that it is

essential that the international community give all due importance to strengthening Africa's capacity through substantial material and financial support for the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa.

Tunisia has constantly strengthened its participation in peace efforts carried out by the Security Council. We believe those efforts should be part of a comprehensive approach that takes into account political, social and economic aspects. In particular, it should take into account the close linkage among development, peace and security. It is therefore important for my country to see the development of an international strategy that is based on integrated steps and that makes it possible to address the deep-rooted causes of conflict, such as poverty and exclusion. Such an approach requires greater involvement by development bodies and an emphasis on quick-impact programmes that can contribute to helping populations emerging from conflict to resume normal lives.

It is for that reason that we believe that we must continue to insist on the need for the Security Council to authorize the participation of countries affected by conflict, United Nations actors and others in the preparation, expansion and renewal of the mandates of United Nations missions. That would make it possible to take into consideration their views and reconstruction expertise, as well as the urgent needs of countries in conflict, thereby guaranteeing the success of those missions.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Mulamula (United Republic of Tanzania): I am all for breaking the monotony of your duties, Mr. President, by mainstreaming the female agenda, and especially by participating in today's debate.

My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting on conflicts in Africa, a subject of great concern to our continent. Indeed, Tanzania recognizes and appreciates Pakistan's contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

The fact that this meeting is being held the day after we observed the first International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is in itself laudable. Allow me to pay tribute to the more than 1,800 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

In the recent past, Africa has occupied no less than 60 per cent of the Security Council's agenda. While that is not a source of pride for Africa, it is a demonstration of the Council's commitment to resolving what seem to be endless conflicts in our continent. We commend the Council for having succeeded in restoring peace in Sierra Leone and in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Those achievements notwithstanding, conflicts in Africa rage unabated, causing millions of deaths, displacing civilians, separating families and devastating economies, to say nothing of the destruction to property and infrastructure that they cause.

It is not my intention to revisit the root causes of conflict in Africa. The Secretary-General's comprehensive report of April 1998 (S/1998/318) and subsequent reports have resulted in resolutions being adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is important, however, always to bear in mind that, without addressing the root causes, it will not be easy to resolve the conflicts afflicting the African continent.

In this context, my delegation wishes to remind the Council that it should attach the greatest importance to the implementation of, inter alia, the Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Consensus and the conclusions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held last year in Johannesburg. Poverty eradication remains an overarching priority if we are to achieve durable peace and sustainable development.

If words were deeds, Africa could be sailing through a conflict-free environment, since so many statements, proposals, resolutions and action plans have been put forward in this Chamber. The question before us, therefore, is how much we have achieved as a consequence of the numerous meetings and debates that have been held and the resulting statements and resolutions. I believe that the search for an answer to that question underlines the significance of today's debate.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains unresolved, despite the achievements on the political front. The Security Council must act, and act swiftly, if we are to avoid a genocidal and humanitarian catastrophe in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo — the troubled region of Ituri. While we welcome today's action by the Council in authorizing the deployment of a multinational force to Bunia, that, as specifically set out in the resolution adopted earlier, is an interim measure. It is our hope that the Secretary-General will be able to deploy a more robust and effective force to effectively deal with the situation on the ground so as to ensure the restoration of lasting peace and stability in the whole of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The killings in Bunia are a sad testimony to the inept mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Any future mandate given to MONUC short of Chapter VII of the Charter, as envisaged in the Lusaka Accord, would fail the Congolese people, on whose behalf that peace agreement was signed.

The commitment of the Government of the United Republic Tanzania to the restoration of peace in the Great Lakes region needs no elaboration. Tanzania recently signed a MONUC status-of-mission agreement with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as part of our effort to strengthen and facilitate the effective presence of MONUC in peace-building efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The smooth transfer of power of the transitional Government in Burundi was a matter of great satisfaction for Tanzania. Tanzania thus welcomes the decision of the Council to send a mission — including a visit to Tanzania — to the region, which will allow Council members, inter alia, to assess the situation on the ground and to obtain first-hand information from the parties. Hopefully, the visit will convince the Council to take further concrete measures in advancing the peace process and to seriously attempt to find a lasting solution to end the conflicts raging in the region and to achieve durable peace and stability.

In welcoming the forthcoming mission of the Council to our region, I would like to take this opportunity to assure you, Mr. President, of Tanzania's unwavering commitment to, continued support for and cooperation in efforts towards the restoration of lasting peace in the Great Lakes region.

Finally, we would like to call upon the Council to gather up the necessary political will and implement fully all that it has committed itself to doing in Africa through its several resolutions and presidential statements. We have confidence that a determined Security Council can bring results that will be in the interests of lasting peace and stability in Africa and, in particular, in the Great Lakes region.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for her kind words addressed to me.

I would now like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

I would like at the outset to express Pakistan's thanks and gratitude to all members of the Council, non-Council members and other speakers for their participation in today's meetings. I am especially grateful to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his enlightening statement. I would also like to thank Ambassador De La Sablière and Ambassador Greenstock for their statements and for agreeing to lead the two Security Council missions to Central Africa and West Africa, respectively. Pakistan wishes those two important missions every success.

The remarks that have been made in our discussion by representatives from Africa have enhanced our understanding of the situation on the continent. Clearly, Africa faces imposing challenges posed by hunger, disease and poverty, as well as by the conflicts that are continuing in various parts of the continent, with grave consequences in terms of human suffering, instability and pervasive underdevelopment.

The causes of the conflicts are complex: ethnic and national rivalries, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, foreign intervention, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the use of mercenaries and child soldiers, human rights violations, refugee movements and internal displacement, as well as the spread of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The root cause of many of the conflicts is, above all, pervasive poverty and hunger, and the representative of Tanzania provided a timely reminder to the Council of the importance of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Monterrey Consensus.

The illegal exploitation of the natural resources of African countries fuels these conflicts. The control of resource-rich areas appears to be a major military objective of most of the warring groups, rebel movements and Governments alike. We have had conflict diamonds in the case of West Africa and, now, conflict timber in the case of Liberia. Next, we may perhaps be dealing with conflict gold or platinum, and the list could be endless.

The Security Council must adopt an active approach designed to create peace in Africa. The approach of the Council should be comprehensive and it should aim at durable solutions. Clearly, such durable solutions would need to encompass several aspects.

First, they must generate ownership of the solutions by the parties concerned. Secondly, they must be accompanied by the political will of those who support peace at the domestic, national, regional and international levels. Thirdly, these solutions must be accompanied by the provision of adequate resources and financial assistance for the purposes of peace-building and peace sustenance. In the long term, the best solutions for conflicts would be the integration of these nations and regions into the world system of trade and finance on an equitable and sustainable basis. Fourthly, such solutions must encompass humanitarian action and respect for humanitarian law. Fifthly, they should be accompanied by disarmament, demobilization and reintegration actions, which have been successful in many cases in the recent past. They must encourage regional approaches, since many of the conflicts are interlinked and interdependent. Lastly, such solutions must be based on the determination of the Security Council to implement its decisions and to ensure that agreements that are concluded are adhered to by the parties concerned. The Council's sanctions can be targeted and can be made more effective to ensure such results.

The Council could also consider enhancing the effectiveness of the mechanisms which it deploys for the resolution of conflicts. First, the mechanism of the special representatives of the Secretary-General have proved to be valuable not only in Africa, but elsewhere as well, and these must receive full support from the Security Council. Secondly, the Security Council's missions, such as the two which are going to West and Central Africa, are also increasingly useful in bringing home to the Council the realities of the conflicts and in bringing home to those parties concerned the attention and focus of the Security Council on these conflicts. Thirdly, peacekeeping operations, in Africa as elsewhere, must be accompanied by a robust mandate and adequate resources.

Pakistan, which has participated actively in peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Africa and elsewhere, supports the strengthening of the mandate and the size of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to effectively achieve its objectives. We welcome the adoption of the resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo this morning for the deployment of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force, to which Pakistan will positively consider contributing a contingent with a robust force to achieve the objectives for which the Multinational Force has been established.

We would suggest consideration of two new possible mechanisms by the Security Council. First, the Council could create enquiry bodies to establish the facts in the case of certain crises. These enquiry bodies could work along the lines of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in order to trace the resources and to chase the money trail back to those who finance and fuel various conflicts in various parts of Africa. Secondly, we would suggest that, since the security, political, economic and social dimensions of conflicts are interlinked, it is crucial for the United Nations to enhance coordination and complementarity in the work of its three principal organs in order to create durable solutions.

A way to do this could be to build on the existing cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and to establish ad hoc composite committees, with membership drawn from the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such composite committees could generate a coherent and mutually supportive response to the internecine conflicts and complex crises in Africa and, perhaps, elsewhere. Such composite committees could look at complex emergencies from different perspectives and thus generate coherent solutions. This approach would also reduce the burden on the Security Council, which is increasingly finding itself preoccupied with internal political, economic and development issues in various conflict situations. The involvement of the larger number of States Members of the United Nations in the composite committees would also promote greater participation and greater transparency in the work

involved in the prevention of conflicts, the management of conflicts and the solution of conflicts. In this context, the role of the Council would remain that of an executive branch in promoting the implementation of comprehensive, coherent and proactive approaches. This could also prove to be an effective complement for the realization of the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I request Mr. Gambari, if he has any additional comments, to take the floor.

Mr. Gambari: On behalf of the Secretariat, I would like to thank you, Sir, for your initiative of organizing this meeting and all the members of the Council, as well as the delegations that took the floor to speak on this important and timely topic, "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security". In particular, my new Office, which has responsibility for preparing reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on critical issues affecting Africa, especially the nexus between peace and development, is grateful for those interventions. All of us in the Secretariat will reflect on the views and the proposals made today and will continue to offer our support for Security Council missions to Africa and other United Nations system-wide mechanisms to promote peace and security, especially in Africa.

The recommendations made today relating to the forthcoming missions to Central and West Africa can only strengthen the terms of reference for the missions and enhance a successful outcome. I hope that those suggestions will be taken on board. In my view, Security Council missions to Africa are not goals in themselves. Of course, the missions demonstrate solidarity with the millions of Africans in conflict areas, in particular the millions of women and children who suffer disproportionately from the multiplicity of conflicts on the continent. Council missions also represent valuable further education for those who participate and for Council members who receive their reports upon their return to Headquarters.

Beyond all that, however, it is essential that missions add real value to existing concrete efforts in support of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. In that regard, missions and the Security Council as a whole will need to avoid situations where expectations for peace and development in Africa are raised, only to be subsequently disappointed. It is true, of course, that a primary responsibility for resolving conflict in Africa lies with Africans themselves. However, there is growing evidence in Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi and elsewhere that Africans are serious in their commitment to peace and security in their respective subregions and in the region as a whole. Therefore, the international community, led by the United Nations and spearheaded by the Security Council, has a responsibility under the Charter to support those efforts.

Finally, our discussion today has pointed to a number of key conclusions that, I believe, must guide future action by the Security Council and by the United Nations system as a whole.

First, priority must be accorded to conflict prevention and to post-conflict peace-building in Africa. In that regard, poverty eradication, encouraging the politics of inclusion and addressing other root causes of conflicts must be tackled as a matter of urgency.

Secondly, helping Africans to build capacity for peace operations is essential. In most cases, they have the human resources and a tradition of peacekeeping, but not the logistics or the financial resources to mount large-scale peacekeeping operations on the continent.

Thirdly, the regional dimensions of conflicts in Africa must be taken fully into account in United Nations efforts to resolve conflicts there.

Fourthly, working with the African Union and subregional organizations is a necessity, not a privilege, in our efforts to prevent and resolve African conflict.

Fifthly, it is essential to establish reliable and sustained lines of communication with key actors and parties to conflicts on the ground in Africa, and with those outside Africa who have influence on those parties, so that the Security Council's resolutions and presidential statements are transmitted, received and accepted by the parties on the ground. As we all know, it is one thing to adopt resolutions and to issue presidential statements here in New York and quite another for those statements and resolutions to be understood and respected by the parties to conflicts on the ground in Africa.

Finally, periodic joint meetings between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and even joint missions of both organs to conflict areas in Africa, may be considered as useful tools, especially for realizing the peace-building objectives that we all share. Above all — as you said only a few minutes ago, Mr. President — Council discussions on African conflicts and Council missions to Africa need to be followed by concrete actions, driven by the political will to commit the necessary resources to conflict prevention, management and resolution and to post-conflict peace-building efforts in Africa.

The President: I thank Mr. Gambari, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, for those remarks.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The presidency, on its own responsibility, will summarize important and new suggestions presented during this debate and will circulate them shortly.

This is the last formal meeting of the Pakistan presidency of the Security Council. Pakistan inherited the presidency in good shape from Mexico. We are concluding our presidency with a sense of deep satisfaction. During this month, building on previous efforts, we saw the Council regain its unity of purpose and move forward in a constructive spirit.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to all members of the Security Council, who have extended unfailing cooperation to the Pakistani presidency and have enabled us to discharge our responsibilities this month. I should also like to express my delegation's deepest appreciation to the Security Council secretariat for its invaluable and unstinting support. We are also grateful to the support staff of translators, interpreters and security personnel for their characteristic hard work and good humour during the entire month. I wish to conclude by wishing every success to my successor, Ambassador Lavrov of the Russian Federation, into whose expert and experienced hands the Council presidency will pass next month.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4767

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 June 2003

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4767th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 4 June 2003, at 9.30 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 4 June 2003, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4767th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

"The members of the Council had an extensive and constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."

03-38214 (E) 040603

United Nations S/PV.4768

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4768th meeting

Thursday, 5 June 2003, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Banoum
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Note by the Secretary-General (S/2003/580)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-38318 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Russian*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of June, I should like to take the opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of May. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Munir Akram for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Note by the Secretary-General (S/2003/580)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hans Blix, Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Blix to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2003/580, which contains a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hans Blix, Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Blix: The thirteenth quarterly report of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) is before the Council in document S/2003/580. It covers the period 1 March to 31 May. The Commission carried out inspections in Iraq up to and including Monday, 17 March. The day thereafter, Tuesday, 18 March, all international staff were withdrawn, and the armed action commenced on 19 March.

We are gratified that the withdrawal took place in good order and with full cooperation from the Iraqi side.

I think that the UNMOVIC report speaks for itself. It is a bit longer than usual, because we thought it might be useful for the Council to get a fuller perspective on some of the questions.

Let me highlight some points.

The first point, made in paragraph 8 of the report, is that the Commission has not at any time during the inspections in Iraq found evidence of the continuation or resumption of programmes of weapons of mass destruction or significant quantities of proscribed items — whether from pre-1991 or later. I leave aside the Al Samoud 2 missile system, which we concluded was proscribed.

As I have noted before, this does not necessarily mean that such items could not exist. They might — there remain long lists of items unaccounted for — but it is not justified to jump to the conclusion that something exists just because it is unaccounted for.

In paragraph 11, we note that the long list of proscribed items unaccounted for has not been shortened by inspections or Iraqi declarations, explanations or documentation. It was the task of the Iraqi side to present items unaccounted for, if they existed, or to present evidence — records, documents or other — convincing the inspectors that the items do not exist. If, for whatever reason, this is not done, the international community cannot have confidence that past programmes or any remaining parts of them have been terminated. However, an effective presence of international inspectors will serve as a deterrent against efforts aimed at reactivating or developing new programmes of weapons of mass destruction.

Although during the last month and a half of our inspections the Iraqi side made considerable efforts to provide explanations, to begin inquiries and to

undertake exploration and excavations, those efforts did not bring the answers needed before we withdrew. We did not have time to interview more than a handful of the large number of persons who were said by Iraq to have participated in the unilateral destruction of biological and chemical weapons in 1991. Such interviews might have helped towards the resolution of some outstanding issues, although one must be aware that the totalitarian regime in Iraq continued to cast a shadow on the credibility of all interviews.

The report before the Council gives details of the Commission's supervision of the destruction of 50 Al Samoud 2 missiles out of the 75 declared to have been deployed, and of other items in the missile sphere. As the Council will note from the table in paragraph 115 of the report, the programme of destruction was not completed at the time the inspectors where withdrawn. Fifty per cent of the declared warheads and 98 per cent of the missile engines remained intact. Also, there was no time to assess whether the Al Fatah missile programme stayed within the range allowed by Security Council resolutions.

In the context of the destruction of proscribed items, I should also like to draw the attention of the Council to the information provided in appendix I. It shows that the weapons that were destroyed before inspectors left in 1998 were, in almost all cases, declared by Iraq, and that the destruction occurred before 1993 in the case of missiles, and before 1994 in the case of chemical weapons. The existence and scope of the biological weapons programme was uncovered by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) in 1995, despite Iraq's denials and concealment efforts. As to items, only a few remnants of the biological weapons programme were subsequently found. A great deal — Iraq asserts all — was unilaterally destroyed in 1991.

Thus, in the main, UNSCOM's supervised destruction of actual weapons and agents took place during the early years of the Commission, and had regard mainly to items declared by Iraq, or at least found at sites declared by Iraq. Subsequent UNSCOM disarmament activities dealt almost exclusively with the destruction of equipment and facilities for the production of weapons connected to past programmes. In addition, of course, UNSCOM was able, with great skill, to map large parts of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programmes.

While we are all aware of the large amounts of proscribed items that still remain unaccounted for, we should perhaps take note of the fact that for many years neither UNSCOM nor UNMOVIC made significant finds of weapons. The lack of finds could be because the items were unilaterally destroyed by the Iraqi authorities or else because they were effectively concealed by them. I trust that in the new environment in Iraq, in which there is full access and cooperation, and in which knowledgeable witnesses should no longer be inhibited from revealing what they know, it should be possible to establish the truth we all want to know.

Let me further make some brief comments on mobile facilities, as there is currently much media attention devoted to this issue. Even before UNMOVIC began its inspections, in November 2002, the Commission had received information about such facilities, and our inspectors were looking for sites where such mobile units could be hooked up for support services. Upon our request, the Iraqi side presented some information about the mobile system they possessed. As the Council will see from our report, neither the information presented to us nor pictures given to us by the Iraqi side match the description that has recently been made available to us, as well as to the media, by the United States. At UNMOVIC, we cannot of course make a proper evaluation of the depicted vehicles on the basis of published material alone.

In resolution 1483 (2003), the Security Council declared its intention to revisit the mandate of UNMOVIC. The Council will be aware that UNMOVIC remains ready to resume work in Iraq as an independent verifier or to conduct long-term monitoring, should the Council so decide. In paragraph 16 of the introduction to the report before the Council, and in chapter VIII of the report, there are some comments on UNMOVIC's readiness to resume work in the field. Some reduction in UNMOVIC's staff will take place. However, the core expertise and experience available within UNMOVIC remain a valuable asset that the Security Council could use where the services of an independent body would be required for verification and monitoring. That might be of particular value in the field of biological weapons and missiles, for which there exists no international verification organization.

As this is likely to be my last briefing to the Security Council as Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every member of the Council for the valuable guidance and support offered to UNMOVIC and myself. I would also warmly like to thank the Secretary-General personally and the Secretariat for the excellent cooperation they provided since the creation of UNMOVIC. I have had the opportunity to thank UNMOVIC's College of Commissioners for the advice that it has provided; it has been of great help throughout our existence. I trust that the Council has noted the excellent working relationship that prevailed between Mr. ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency and myself. We formed a good team of long-standing friendship in which his knowledge of Arabic proved more directly useful than my knowledge of Swedish.

I want to end my statement by noting the strong commitment among nations, both within and outside the Security Council, to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to terrorists as well as to States, and to eventually to achieve the elimination of those weapons. The case of Iraq has been a major factor in forging that commitment. The wide support that UNMOVIC has received from Governments and from the public is further testimony to the strong wish to reduce the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction and to the continued importance of inspection.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Blix for his comprehensive briefing. Taking note of the intention of Mr. Blix to retire from his post at the end of June, I wish, on behalf of the members of the Council, to express our sincere gratitude to Mr. Blix for his service, as well as our appreciation for the efforts made by him and his team to implement the mandate of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) in accordance with the Security Council's resolutions. The members of the Council also pay tribute to Mr. Blix for his leadership and for the dedicated and professional manner in which he has guided the work of UNMOVIC in pursuit of the disarmament of Iraq.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of this subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4769

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 June 2003

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4769th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 5 June 2003, at 3.30 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 5 June 2003, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4769th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

"The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."

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Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4770th meeting

Tuesday, 10 June 2003, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Acuña
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. King
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-38923 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Greece and Serbia and Montenegro, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Šahović (Serbia and Montenegro) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Vassilakis (Greece) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

I give the floor to Mr. Annabi.

Mr. Annabi: I am pleased to have this opportunity to brief the Security Council on developments in Kosovo since the previous briefing on 23 April. I assume that the choice of the date for this briefing is not entirely fortuitous, since today is, as I am sure you are aware, Mr. President, the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999). Today, Kosovo is certainly very different from the way it was four years ago. Working with our partners in Kosovo — KFOR, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and, of course, local leaders and bodies — the United Nations has put in place a process designed to stabilize and normalize the situation in Kosovo.

The progress is evident: the reconstruction of basic infrastructure; the restarting of public services such as schools, health care and pensions; the provision of basic documents; an increasingly professional local police and judiciary; three successful elections; and the establishment of municipal and central self-government bodies. At the same time, much remains to be done in developing provisional democratic self-governing institutions and ensuring conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all the inhabitants of Kosovo.

The fact that we still have some way to go was highlighted in a particularly horrific way recently, when three Kosovo Serb residents were brutally murdered in Obilic municipality on 4 June. An 80-year-old man, his 78-year-old wife and their 53-year-old son were beaten to death with a blunt instrument, and their house was then set on fire.

As we informed the Council on 6 June, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has taken a number of concrete steps to find and bring to justice the perpetrators of that horrible crime. A nine-member UNMIK special police squad was established to investigate the crime, working with special advisers from both the Kosovo Serb and the Kosovo Albanian communities. A reward for information leading to the arrest and sentencing of those responsible for the murders has been offered, and a 24-hour protected telephone line has been set up to receive information. UNMIK police and KFOR have both put in place additional patrols and other appropriate security measures. UNMIK and representatives of Kosovo's Provisional Institutions — the Assembly, the Government and the President — and Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb political leaders have all condemned the murders and have called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

UNMIK and the Kosovo Provisional Institutions have continued their joint efforts to transfer to the Provisional Institutions the non-reserved responsibilities listed in chapter 5 of the Constitutional Framework. The Transfer Council met for the second time on 28 May and agreed on the transfer of 19 non-reserved competencies to the Provisional Institutions, with a further 17 to be transferred as soon as the Provisional Institutions have the capacity to assume them. Eight competencies were returned to the working groups for further consideration. Kosovo Serb representatives did not participate in that most recent meeting of the Transfer Council.

The Provisional Institutions have continued their work, with a particular emphasis on legislative development. Since the Council was last briefed, the four laws — which had been returned to the Assembly for revision, since they were not fully compliant with resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework — have been promulgated, with two of the laws revised by the Assembly and two revised under the authority of the Special Representative. The Kosovo Assembly also adopted six new laws, with one of them being deemed to be outside its area of competence. The Assembly, in a special procedure, also reviewed and agreed to the provisional criminal procedure codes, which, as reserved competencies, will be issued as UNMIK regulations. The Assembly, however, did instruct an "appropriate body" to draft a law on elections, although that is, of course, an area which is outside its area of competence.

On 15 May, the Assembly endorsed a controversial resolution on the "liberation war of the people of Kosovo for freedom and independence". While this resolution may have brought the Kosovo Albanian political parties closer to a common view of their respective roles in the past, it was clearly not conducive to cross-ethnic dialogue and reconciliation. The Special Representative, Mr. Michael Steiner, issued a declaration stating that the text of the resolution was divisive and against the spirit of resolution 1244 (1999). In addition, the hosts of three international meetings decided, after consulting with the Special Representative, to withdraw the invitations to attend that they had sent to the Provisional Institutions.

The Kosovo Serb caucus — Coalition Return — has participated in all Kosovo Assembly sessions since April. Coalition Return members did, however, walk out of a plenary session on 15 May during the discussion of the resolution on "the liberation war of the people of Kosovo for freedom and independence". They, however, returned for the rest of the session after the resolution was passed. Coalition Return also left the 5 June Assembly session in protest of the triple murder in Obilic municipality and have scheduled a meeting for 11 June to discuss its continued participation in the joint structures.

Development in the municipalities has been slow in the past months. One third of the municipalities are still not run in accordance with democratic values due to political boycotts, mainly by Kosovo Albanian parties, leading to gridlock. The provision of fair-share financing to minority communities and the use of official languages in the documents and signs in most municipalities remain poor. In northern Mitrovica, UNMIK appointed an eight-member Advisory Board consisting of six Kosovo Serbs, one Kosovo Albanian and one Bosniac. However, during the Board's first meeting, held on 30 May, the Kosovo Serb representatives objected to the Board's composition. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for 16 June.

UNMIK reports that the crime statistics for the first four months of 2003 show that there has been a reduction in cases of murder, burglary and robbery in comparison with the same period for 2002. Incidents of what appears to be inter-ethnic violence are, however, a cause for concern. The Kosovo Police Service (KPS) has continued its development; there are now close to 5,500 local police officers, in comparison to just over 4,000 international police officers. An additional police station is now under KPS management in Stimlje, bringing the total number of stations under KPS management to four. UNMIK Police continued to build relations with their Serbian counterparts. Similarly, police cooperation with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is expanding through regular contacts and meetings.

Freedom of movement for the Kosovo Serb community remains difficult. The recent triple murder in Obilic will be a setback in this regard by contributing to an increasingly negative perception of security conditions allowing their free movement. Increased freedom of movement for Kosovo Serbs has also been hindered by the decision of the Serbian Government authorities not to sign an agreement on the use of Kosovo licence plates in Serbia proper and by

their public calls for Kosovo Serbs not to register their cars with UNMIK. On 13 May, however, UNMIK and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia reached agreement on the mutual recognition of vehicle insurance, so that vehicles with Kosovo licence plates can travel freely in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under a single, comprehensive insurance policy. During the Ohrid Conference on Border Security and Management, UNMIK and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia also completed an exchange of letters addressing the practical modalities associated with the opening of two temporary local crossing points between Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for residents of the area.

As previously reported, a comprehensive and coordinated framework to support minority returns is in place, with local authorities in nearly half of the municipalities working with representatives of the displaced community in municipal working groups. During the first five months of 2003, a total of 437 Kosovo Serbs — 330 Roma/Ashkali/Egyptians, 133 Bosniacs, 31 Gorani and 61 Kosovo Albanians — have returned to areas where they are a minority. The murders in Obilic on 4 June are a serious setback for our efforts to foster multi-ethnicity in Kosovo and create conditions for the return of Kosovo Serbs and others to areas where they are a minority. Returns efforts also face a substantial shortfall in funding, with only 55 per cent of returns projects funded and a gap of 72 per cent in funding for the United Nations Development Programme-UNMIK Rapid Response Returns Facility, which provides assistance to individual returns.

On the economic side, on 9 May the Special Representative promulgated a regulation on the Transformation of the Right of Use to Socially-Owned Immovable Property. This regulation — commonly referred to as the Land Use Regulation — converts land-use rights held by socially-owned enterprises into 99-year leaseholds, which can be freely transferred and used as guarantee for security credits without affecting underlying ownership title. The Kosovo Trust Agency Board announced on 15 May tenders for the first six enterprises earmarked for the first round of privatization; 12 more are expected to issue shortly. The Agency's operating procedures, adopted last month, provide the framework for privatization through tender procedures. Any Government, person or entity who assert that their rights have been adversely affected by the privatization process may submit an appeal to the Special Chamber of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, which has the power for final adjudication of claims, including payment of compensation, from the proceeds of the privatization to claimants whose rights the Special Chamber finds have been violated by the privatization process. UNMIK has informed us that the Special Chamber will be operational on 16 June, when its rules of procedure are promulgated. Claims are already receivable by the Registrar of the Chamber.

Unfortunately, the dialogue between Belgrade and the Kosovo Provisional Institutions has not started. Limited, working-level contacts have, however, taken place between representatives of the Provisional Institutions and their Serbian counterparts in the fields of transport and returns. Working-level contacts between UNMIK and Belgrade have also continued in a number of fields, although dialogue and constructive engagement at the political level have remained difficult. The meeting of the High Ranking Working Group, which was scheduled to take place on 13 May at the request of Belgrade, did not take place because of preconditions set by the Belgrade delegation before discussion of the topics on the official agenda could begin. As a result, the protocol on the recognition of Kosovo licence plates, which I mentioned earlier, was not signed. Belgrade also continues to support parallel structures offering services such as the issuance of civil registration documents and the payment of pensions in parallel to UNMIK.

As a result of the suspected involvement of members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) in terrorism and organized crime, particularly since the 12 April bombing of a railway bridge in Zvecan, a travel ban was imposed on KPC members in order to avoid the risk that members associated with extremist organizations might be sent on training missions abroad. The travel ban has since been lifted on a case-by-case basis. The KPC was asked to disclose the names of other KPC members who might be associated with extremist groups. A special UNMIK-KFOR board has been set up to coordinate action against suspected extremist infiltration into the KPC.

The KPC did distance itself from the overtures made by political leaders debating the "war values" resolution of the Kosovo Assembly. A positive achievement was the that eight Kosovo Serbs, three Turks, two Croats and one Ashkali have joined, or are

in an advanced stage of recruitment into, the KPC. The Kosovo Serbs are joining despite calls from Kosovo Serb leaders for them not to do so. Over 30 per cent of the positions set aside for minorities have been filled, although minority community members are not yet present in the higher ranks of the KPC.

Four years into UNMIK's mandate, we can say that there has been significant progress, but we are still facing challenges such as freedom of movement, meaningful minority participation, returns, the institutional development of local bodies and dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Since the emergency phase, the focus has been on political and institutional development. In 2000 and 2001, UNMIK established the legal framework for Kosovo's path towards substantial autonomy and self-government: the Law on Local Self-Government and the Constitutional Framework, as well as subsidiary legislation. Following the establishment of the Provisional Institutions, the benchmarks set out by the Special Representative and the policy of "standards before status" have been, and continue to be, the guiding principles for the current phase.

Political pressure on UNMIK has significantly increased, with attempts to challenge its role under resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework. One the one hand, the Provisional Institutions, particularly the Kosovo Assembly, have overstepped their competencies on a number of occasions. On the other hand, Belgrade continues to seek co-governance with UNMIK and, in lending support to parallel structures, supports the boycott of UNMIK policy and programmes. Unilateral calls from Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs and Belgrade for mutually exclusive solutions for Kosovo's future have continued, and they have not contributed to reconciliation and inter-ethnic dialogue. That has frozen forward movement on a number of key issues.

At the same time, organized criminal groups and extremist elements are increasing their intrusions into political life. Outbreaks of violence serve the interests of extremists on all sides. Such activity is undoubtedly fuelled by political goals, but also by the current grim economic conditions: the unemployment rate in Kosovo is 57 per cent, with worse rates for minorities and women. Extremists remain on the margins, and voices of moderation exist in all communities. However, those voices remain muted.

UNMIK has continued to do its best to ensure that all developments in Kosovo remain within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework. UNMIK has continued to focus on the implementation of the mandate, in line with the "standards before status" policy framework. The Council's continued and active support for UNMIK has been, and will continue to be, crucial for the full implementation of the mandate entrusted to it by the Council.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his briefing. Last week, the Security Council firmly condemned the reprehensible murder that was just mentioned by Mr. Annabi. I would like to return to that today because that crime is part of a current that runs against the common efforts that we have been making for exactly four years, since we adopted resolution 1244 (1999) on 10 June 1999, with a view to a modern, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. We cannot permit any indulgence towards those attempting to sabotage the efforts by the international community to promote, in a safe environment, a multi-ethnic and tolerant society in Kosovo. Everything must be done to put an end to the ethnic violence in Kosovo, of which the Serbian community is the principal victim. The presumed perpetrators must be quickly apprehended and brought to justice. We support the measures taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in that context, and we will closely follow that inquiry.

The Provisional Institutions of Self-Government have a particular responsibility to re-establish a climate conducive to the realization of the objectives of the international community for the benefit of the entire Kosovo population. I wish to state here very clearly that the Assembly in particular must renounce those initiatives that are contrary to resolution 1244 (1999) or the Constitutional Framework. Those initiatives only divide the Kosovo communities. No progress can be achieved in Kosovo on the basis of unilateral action that is contrary to resolution 1244 (1999) or that flouts the authority of UNMIK and KFOR. We expect the Institutions of Self-Government to work in good faith with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNMIK in order to implement the norms sanctioned by the international community. I am thinking in particular of the guarantee of minority rights and of the establishment of a direct dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade on practical issues of

common interest, for which the cooperation of the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro is equally indispensable. Based on that condition, the transfer of non-reserved competencies will have positive and lasting effects and it will be in that context that the question of status can begin to be addressed.

We align ourselves fully with the statement that will be made shortly by Greece on behalf of the European Union. The 21 June 2003 Thessaloniki Summit will be crucial to strengthening the European perspective of the region and to offering Kosovo the opportunity to be successfully reintegrated into its regional environment. It is our hope that the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government will take that opportunity.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I thank Mr. Annabi for his excellent and comprehensive update. I am glad that he reminded us that this is the fourth anniversary of resolution 1244 (1999). His overview shows clearly that a lot has been accomplished in those four years, but clearly also that a lot more remains to be done and that there are problems ahead.

Regarding one of those problems, it pains me to begin my intervention on Kosovo with, again, a condemnation of violence, as we had to do in April, when we condemned the attack by the so-called Albanian National Army on a railway bridge. Now we have the violent murders that others have already referred to in Obilic. The killings appear to have been motivated by the early success of the Serb return programme there, and thus are to be particularly condemned, because this goes to the heart of what the international community and the Kosovars are trying to accomplish. We support the measures taken by the Special Representative to bring the perpetrators to justice and to encourage close cooperation among all involved to ensure security in Kosovo.

I also want to note that President Bush signed an executive order on 28 May, revoking the national emergency as declared in 1992 and 1998 executive orders with respect to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and, with that new order, taking additional steps with respect to persons who obstruct implementation of the Dayton Accords, the Ohrid Framework Agreement or Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). This puts in place additional national measures on our part to combat extremism in the region.

We cannot, however, allow violence by a small minority to undermine what has been achieved and what is still to be achieved. Progress has been made on a number of fronts — on the transfer of non-reserved competencies to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, or strengthening the presence of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in Mitrovica and on needed economic reforms. We are pleased to hear that an expert from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has arrived to begin work on UNMIK's plan for implementing the benchmarks and, as we have promised, my Government will provide funding for an additional expert to assist in that effort.

We continue to believe that the implementation plan is a critical step in reinforcing the benchmarks process and that "standards before status" must be more than just a slogan. More progress must be made on practical issues, if we are to overcome suspicion and build the trust and reconciliation that will be required for resolution 1244 (1999) to be fully implemented.

On the economic front, we believe that the privatization process must move forward without further delay. The promulgation of the land use regulation was the last step needed to allow first tenders to be offered under UNMIK's privatization plan for some 350 socially-owned enterprises. Privatization is the best hope for generating economic activity in Kosovo. Regardless of future decisions on its final status, Kosovo must not be left without economic means. It is important that property rights be both clearly established and enforced uniformly for each owner or claimant. We note the creation of the Special Chamber for adjudicating owners' and creditors' claims and trust that it will provide a fair and transparent venue for dispute resolution with Serbian companies or others. As long as it does not delay the ongoing privatization process, work should begin immediately to set up a claims register that accepts submissions in Serbia in order to protect the rights of claimants there and provide full information to potential buyers.

In order for us to be able to target and address such issues as soon as possible, the United States strongly urges UNMIK, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government and the Government of Serbia and

Montenegro to foster and persist in creating a constructive dialogue. We know that this is difficult, but it is the only way to resolve the issues that remain before us and the only way to create a stable future. My Government is looking for ways to promote that dialogue in a variety of ways and in a variety of forums. We will continue our efforts in the months ahead to help build trust and encourage the relationships needed to make Kosovo work.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to convey to Mr. Hédi Annabi how much we appreciated his briefing, which was particularly rich in information regarding developments in Kosovo. His briefing makes it possible for the members of the United Nations family present in the Chamber to have an accurate idea of the progress made over four years and of the situation prevailing in Kosovo in the institutional, security and economic areas. I would like to focus my statement on those three areas, which, it should be recalled, are the three priority pillars for Kosovo in 2003.

In that context, and despite the lack of progress in dealing with certain substantive issues, it is a fact that the Kosovo Provisional Institutions are functioning. We believe that the persistence of problems just underscored by Mr. Annabi results from internal disputes fuelled by partisan rivalry that encourages intolerance, hatred and rejection of one's fellow citizens. Under those conditions, constructing a multi-ethnic, multicultural Kosovo demands that the actions of the Provisional Institutions and of the municipalities involve the entire population of Kosovo in all its sociological components.

Their efforts need to be backed by the international community, and Belgrade has an important role to play. But what is the use of such support if the Provisional Institutions — which are calling for acceleration of the transfer of competencies described in chapter 5 of the Constitutional Framework — do not show genuine political will and an unfailing commitment to meet the many challenges facing all Kosovans, of whom they are the representatives: to ensure freedom of movement, organize real participation in the Provisional Institutions and the municipal bodies by the entire active population of the province, and facilitate the reintegration of minorities and ensure their safety, security and protection, as well as their access to education. Those are some of the challenges on the road to a multi-ethnic and multicultural Kosovo.

The situation of minorities is indeed of concern, particularly with regard to security. Information reaching us confirms the precariousness of their situation. On 4 June the whole world learned with distress of the murder in Obilic of Mr. and Mrs. Slobodan Stolic and their son, members of the Serb minority. We strongly condemn that heinous crime; everything must be done to find the perpetrators and to bring them to justice. That is why my delegation supports the recent measures taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner. This odious act, which undermines the international community's efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation, reminds us that the road towards peace and the restoration of confidence in Kosovo continues to be fraught with obstacles of all sorts. We must remain vigilant and determined in our efforts and demonstrate firm and steadfast resolve in our struggle against insecurity. We must likewise be watchful and resolute in supporting the Provisional Institutions and in monitoring their activities, as well as in the fight against poverty and unemployment, which lead to hatred, violence and intolerance.

The current environment, which is characterized by insecurity and the absence of a strong legal framework, can hardly attract private investment. The elements of a free-market economy that have already been established in Kosovo therefore deserve to be supported. Further incentive measures should be taken to that end, with strict respect for existing legal provisions, in order to accelerate the privatization process and to relaunch economic activity and create jobs.

The Secretary-General has told us — and his colleagues have reiterated to us — that we must take a comprehensive approach in order to attain the objectives sought in Kosovo. That approach should also respect the cultural specificities of the province and align Kosovo towards progressive integration into a Europe of shared values. That is how we believe it may be possible to arrive at a multi-ethnic and multicultural Kosovo in which there is peace, tolerance, security, brotherhood, justice and economic and social development for all. The main responsibility for the advent of that Kosovo, to which we all aspire, is, above all, the responsibility of all the people of Kosovo themselves, including every ethnic group.

I cannot conclude my statement without conveying our heartfelt encouragement to the Secretary-General and his team and to the men and women of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, who are working courageously and doggedly every day to implement the recommendations of the international community in order to bring about the birth of a new and modern Kosovo in which peace, stability and harmony prevail: a Kosovo that is a good place to live.

Mr. Raytchev (Bulgaria): Allow me, first of all, to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Council on Kosovo. I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his comprehensive briefing.

Bulgaria, an associated country of the European Union, fully supports the statement that will be made later in this debate by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore limit myself to a few brief comments in my national capacity.

We welcome the progress achieved in the peace process in Kosovo and extend our thanks to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Michael Steiner, for his efforts aimed at normalizing life in the region.

Bulgaria fully shares the view of the Contact Group on Kosovo expressed in Berlin on 19 May 2003 that considerable practical work still remains to be done in order to fulfil the benchmarks — especially those in the area of democratic governance — before the issue of Kosovo's status can be addressed. In that context, we believe that the final word on the status of Kosovo should be given to the United Nations, in compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

As a country of the South-Eastern European region, Bulgaria expresses its legitimate concern about the ongoing unilateral attempts and acts from different sides directed at implementing solutions not supported by the international community. In that connection, we think that destructive action aimed at obtaining unilateral political benefits should be categorically condemned.

We emphasize once again our position that the political structures of all communities in Kosovo should demonstrate a higher political culture by bringing to an end all attempts to ignore the recommendations of the Special Representative; such attempts undermine and delay the process of normalization. As a factor of stability in the region, Bulgaria is interested in seeing the process of normalization continue in a speedy, organized and peaceful manner. That would have a strong, positive impact on the overall development of South-Eastern Europe and on its prosperity.

We are aware of the fact that the process of transferring competencies from UNMIK to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in accordance with paragraph 11 of resolution 1244 (1999) will not be an easy one. We hope that the recently established Transfer Council will proceed cautiously in its work by simultaneously taking into account the need for the swift achievement of the benchmarks and the legitimate interests of all communities and inhabitants of Kosovo. An important element in that process is the implementation of a realistic road map for the transfer of powers that more clearly marks the way towards implementing the "standards before status" policy on the basis of the benchmarks.

In our view, local authorities should make real efforts, monitored by the international community, to build a functioning administration at all levels in Kosovo that reflects the multi-ethnic character of the region and serves all of Kosovo's inhabitants in a professional manner.

Bulgaria considers the continuing acts of inter-ethnic violence and the activities of organized crime in Kosovo as a strong destructive factor. We therefore call on local political leaders to exert their authority and influence in order to establish relations based on inter-ethnic tolerance. For that reason, we strongly condemn the murder of a Serb family in Obilic earlier this month and hope that those responsible will be brought to justice.

We support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to combat organized crime and the trafficking of human beings, as well as his efforts to revitalize the economy by attracting investment and to solve the daily practical problems of the population in Kosovo.

The presence of UNMIK and KFOR plays a key role in Kosovo's security as well as in the wider region. Bulgaria will continue to actively participate in these

operations of the international community aimed at maintaining peace and security.

Finally, we believe that in the forthcoming period all local political actors should focus their energy on solving concrete problems and normalizing life in Kosovo, rather than on making declarations calling for independence or division, which provoke concern in the region and in the international community. That would be appropriate behaviour and would lead to a timely resolution of the status issue in compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. King (United Kingdom): We are grateful for today's briefing.

The United Kingdom fully associates itself with the statement that will be made later by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union and its acceding and associated countries.

If I may, I just want to take this opportunity to take up three points in particular. First, in the context of the agreed "standards before status" policy, I would just like to underline that the United Kingdom fully supports the efforts to make the benchmarks operational. We are grateful for the comments and practical suggestions that have been made today regarding taking that important work forward, especially those made by the representatives of the Secretariat and the United States. As others have already said, we need to maintain our efforts in that regard.

Secondly, Mr. Annabi raised the question of tackling parallel structures. I would be grateful for anything more that he might want to add on where we stand, in particular on UNMIK's progress in that regard in Mitrovica.

Thirdly, as our Fifth Committee colleagues recently discussed, UNMIK will see a reduction in staff numbers in the period ahead. We would welcome anything more that Mr. Annabi could say about how, in practice, UNMIK will proceed in shifting its activities from an executive role to a monitoring advisory role.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We should like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very important meeting. My delegation also thanks Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his comprehensive briefing on the most recent developments in the situation in Kosovo.

My delegation strongly condemns the heinous crime committed a few days ago, on 4 June, in Kosovo — in which the perpetrators murdered a family consisting of an 80-year-old man, his wife and his son and burned their home, having threatened the elderly man several times before murdering him — as an event that threatens security in Kosovo in general. My delegation supports the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to arrest the perpetrators of that crime and to bring them to justice.

We also support the gradual transfer of authority to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo. We should like to stress, first of all, the need to accord high priority to the situation and to prevent such crimes from occurring later on, because that would negatively affect the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes and their active participation in rebuilding the province of Kosovo. More than ever before, Kosovo sorely needs participation by all ethnic groups in its economic, social and political life. In that connection, we must promote dialogue among the various ethnic groups and factions in Kosovo in order to end the violence and to rebuild a safe and secure society in which all ethnic groups live together in harmony.

Secondly, my delegation would like to emphasize the importance of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina so that the Provisional Institutions will assist UNMIK in beginning a dialogue with neighbouring countries on practical issues. We should also like to stress the importance of ensuring freedom of movement throughout Kosovo for all ethnic groups in a way that guarantees their security and safety and brings stability to all areas of life in Kosovo.

Finally, my delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General and especially Mr. Steiner and UNMIK for their efforts to achieve security, reconciliation and stability in this very important part of the world. Mr. Steiner and his Mission deserve the full support of the Security Council in order to ensure the Mission's success.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): On behalf of the Angolan delegation, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting on the situation in Kosovo. We express our thanks to Mr. Hedi Annabi for his briefing, which provided an update on the situation there.

We commend the work accomplished thus far by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and by the international community at large in building a democratic State infrastructure from the ground up in Kosovo — a task of the greatest complexity, especially in such a deeply traumatized and divided society. Those accomplishments, and the commitment of the standing forces to the objectives set for Kosovo by the international community, are signals of hope for a better future in the region.

The most encouraging development in the political process of Kosovo is the current transfer of responsibilities from UNMIK to Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government. Notwithstanding the imperfect functioning of those Institutions — and the assertion by the Special Representative that Kosovo still has some way to go in establishing representative and functioning institutions accountable to the Kosovo population — meaningful progress has been achieved. We reaffirm our full support for the pursuit of that process, as outlined in the Constitutional Framework.

It is widely recognized that the existence of a political landscape with some degree of coherence is a crucial element for the establishment of solid and representative institutions, that the interparty struggle should not undermine the stability of the institutions, and that the public administration should not be built along partisan lines. Kosovo's current political situation presents realities that run counter to those basic assertions, and we hope that they are part of the learning process of democratic stabilization. That lends more consistency to the "standards before status" policy as the framework for achieving the goals set for the transitional period and as an essential element in the shaping of Kosovo's future.

At the same time, the other crucial elements of this institution-building process are strengthening the rule of law by enhancing the judicial system's efficiency, impartiality and overall functioning, and enhancing law enforcement institutions in order to curb organized crime and ethnic violence and to bring all criminals to justice. We encourage UNMIK and the Special Representative to pursue a consistent policy against destabilizing forces and criminal elements and for establishing the rule of law as the social foundation of Kosovo. In that regard, we are of the view that the international community should lend its full support to the Illicit Small Arms Control Project, to be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme in Kosovo and in Serbia and Montenegro, aimed at controlling the spread and accumulation of illicit small arms and light weapons, which are one of the main sources of crime and violence in Kosovo.

To build a multi-ethnic and democratic society, freedom of movement must be secured for all the communities in Kosovo. We are very concerned by the restrictions on movement still being imposed on minorities; by the denial of their right to use their own language and alphabet throughout the territory; and by the continued violence, harassment and discrimination faced by minorities, intended to discourage their return to Kosovo as well as their participation in public life, according to the assessment made by the Secretary-General's Special Representative.

We are aware that much remains to be done and that the leaders of Kosovo bear particular responsibility for promoting the integration of minorities, which, in the end, constitutes the core question of the Kosovo issue. We see encouraging signals in this direction and meaningful accomplishments in this very important endeavour. Great difficulties still lie ahead on the road towards the fulfilment of hopes for a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo, but it is our conviction that with perseverance and an imaginative approach it will be possible to make important advances towards the attainment of that goal.

There are reports on progress made by the Provisional Institutions and some municipalities in providing support for the return of minority communities. There are encouraging developments that should be supported and encouraged. We commend UNMIK and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on their work for the return of refugees and displaced persons.

A fundamental element for the normalization of the situation and for ensuring the rights of minorities is dialogue between the provisional authorities of Kosovo and the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro. We encourage such dialogue, and it is our hope that direct talks on practical issues can soon begin, as a means to overcome differences and misunderstandings and to contribute to helping the political process to move in the right direction. We commend the efforts by the Special Representative to advance such dialogue.

Before concluding, we would like to express our condemnation for the recent heinous and brutal assassination of the Stolic family — a crime directed

against efforts to create a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo, as described by the Assistant Secretary-General.

Finally, we pay special tribute to Mr. Michael Steiner, to UNMIK and to all those who have been deploying immense efforts in the building of a democratic and multi-ethnic nation in Kosovo.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing on the latest developments in Kosovo.

Four years ago the Security Council adopted resolution 1244 (1999), laying the basis for a comprehensive settlement of the Kosovo question. Accordingly, the Provisional Institutions of Kosovo should scrupulously fulfil their obligations. Like other countries, we call on the Provisional Institutions to continue to take effective action to crack down on crime, guarantee the rights and interests of ethnic minorities and promote economic development, as well as to fully cooperate with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Government of Serbia and Montenegro, with a view to the early achievement of social stability, economic development and ethnic harmony.

China, like other countries, condemns all atrocities and other acts of violence, which undermine the social stability of Kosovo. The Chinese delegation appreciates the tireless efforts of UNMIK aimed at the restoration of stability, the establishment of the rule of law, economic development and the promotion of ethnic harmony. We support the "standards before status" policy of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner, and the series of measures in the benchmark process. We hope that UNMIK will continue to effectively carry out its mandate, satisfactorily deal with the decentralization question and take further measures to ensure that the Provisional Institutions fulfil their responsibilities.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful to Mr. Annabi for his briefing. As Greece, speaking on behalf of the European Union, will be making a statement which Spain fully supports, I will limit myself to a few brief observations.

Events in recent weeks show that there is a long way to go on the road towards a multi-ethnic Kosovo based on the principles of justice, tolerance and respect for human rights. We are concerned in particular by the fact that there continue to be serious acts of violence, threats and cases of intimidation and discrimination against members of minority groups.

The return of displaced persons and refugees is of fundamental importance, and we must all redouble our efforts to make that possible.

Furthermore, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government have yet to prove that they are capable of functioning normally and of being genuinely representative and responsible. They must devote themselves exclusively to the management and administration of matters under their competency — matters that affect all the people of Kosovo.

Spain views with great concern the attitude of the Kosovo Albanian leaders, who are publicly promoting, on an ongoing basis, positions that run counter to resolution 1244 (1999). All of the communities of Kosovo must participate actively in the provisional and municipal institutions. Lack of participation in those institutions will prevent progress on concrete issues of public administration and will do nothing to improve Kosovo's international image. We condemn any attempt to create mono-ethnic institutions, and we appeal for the dismantling of the parallel administrative structures that are still in operation.

Lastly, we emphasize the need to implement the initiative of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to maintain a dialogue on practical issues between the Belgrade authorities and the Kosovo Provisional Institutions, in the framework of resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Acuña (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open meeting of the Security Council — the first on this subject since 23 April. Chile once again expresses its support for what we believe could prove to be one of the most important peace-building enterprises in the history of the United Nations: the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), a mission in which our country feels honoured to participate. We commend the work carried out by Mr. Michael Steiner, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo, and all the staff of UNMIK over the past four years.

We would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping

Operations, for his enlightening description of the situation in Kosovo and in Serbia and Montenegro.

We would like at the outset to express our great consternation at the reprehensible murder of a Serbian family in Obilic on 4 June. We reject, in addition to that crime, all acts of violence, harassment and discrimination on ethnic grounds — actions that run counter to the achievement of a multi-ethnic, modern and democratic Kosovo.

With regard to the recent decisions taken by UNMIK, we reaffirm that, in terms of the economy and of investment, resolution 1244 (1999) constitutes the cornerstone of the process. Resolution 1244 (1999) is the guiding principle and must determine decisions on Kosovo. The decisions adopted in accordance with the mandate set down by that resolution must be heeded and respected by the parties.

Mr. Pujalte (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful to Mr. Hédi Annabi for the extremely complete and precise information he has provided us with today on the situation in Kosovo and the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Like most members of the Council, Mexico cannot fail to express its sorrow and distress at the news of the murder of the Stolic family that occurred in the town of Obilic, Kosovo, on 4 June. As was rightly stated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner, that act was a direct attack on the efforts to build a multi-ethnic Kosovo. My delegation is profoundly concerned that this murder could delay the process of community reconciliation and coexistence and have a negative impact on the sustainable return of displaced persons to that and other towns of Kosovo.

This type of crime must be energetically repudiated, not only by the UNMIK authorities, but also and above all by Kosovo's elected representatives. In this regard, we take note of the statements made by the main elected representatives of Kosovo, who immediately condemned the crime and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. We join those voices of condemnation and trust that the crime will be investigated and that those guilty will be punished. We hope that UNMIK and the Kosovo Force will do their utmost to provide greater security and protection to the Serb families and to other minorities in Obilic, who are, quite naturally, extremely fearful at the moment.

My delegation also expresses its concern at this weekend's attack in Pristina, in which several persons were wounded by an explosive device. The incidents of violence that are occurring with increasing frequency in various areas of Kosovo — be they acts of political violence, ethnicity-based attacks or simply cases of organized crime — undoubtedly threaten the stability of Kosovo.

Furthermore, we appeal to the elected representatives of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, in particular the representatives of the Albanian majority, to avoid in the future promoting any initiative that runs counter to the spirit of resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework, as well as to the objective of making Kosovo a multi-ethnic, pluralistic and tolerant society. The most recent example of such initiatives is the resolution adopted by the Kosovo Assembly on 15 May regarding the 1998-1999 conflict.

At the same time, my delegation considers that the elected representatives of the ethnic minorities in the Assembly, in particular the Serb representatives, would achieve better results and greater benefits for their electorate if they were to adopt a more participative attitude, instead of withdrawing from the legislature when they encounter a difficult situation.

We would also request the Secretariat to provide us — perhaps at a special meeting convened for that purpose — with further information on and, above all, a more detailed analysis of the privatization process in Kosovo and other related aspects, such as the legislation on the transformation of the right of use to socially-owned immovable property. It is vital that this process of privatization be undertaken transparently, since it will have a broad, long-term impact.

In conclusion, four years after the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999), Mexico reiterates its support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and all the personnel of UNMIK in the work that lies ahead.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I should like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing and his timely reminder that today is the fourth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999). However, the situation inside Kosovo today still gives us cause for concern.

As others have done, I should like to condemn the brutal murders of the Stolic family in Obilic on 4 June. We hope that no effort will be spared to bring the perpetrators to justice. We condemn all ethnically-motivated acts and crimes in Kosovo. The culture of impunity for such crimes must now come to an end. Whether these crimes were committed six days ago or six years ago, those who committed them should not be allowed to escape justice.

Since I do not wish to cover the same ground as others have before me, I would like to focus only on two issues: first, the immediate priorities inside Kosovo and, secondly, Pakistan's position on the future of that territory.

Inside Kosovo, as recent events have amply illustrated, security and the rule of law remain the two most vital issues which need to be addressed urgently. Without security, there can be no freedom of movement, no protection of minorities, no sustainable return of refugees and no economic recovery. The rule of law is central to progress towards justice, reconciliation and self-governance. These are the two essential pillars on which the success of the provisional institutions and the future political stability of Kosovo will be founded. We hope that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo will give these two issues the priority they deserve.

At the same time, we support the Secretary-General's call on local leaders to work together to consolidate these institutions by focusing on substance and practical results instead of holding institutional developments hostage to political or ethnic differences. We echo his appeal to local leaders to work together for a multi-ethnic Kosovo. We urge the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the establishment of the standards that should facilitate a solution for the political status of Kosovo.

I would like to affirm that Pakistan regards the "standards before status" formula as unique, applying to Kosovo only. We hope in this regard that progress on the status issue can also begin at an early stage. In this process, we attach importance to the following.

First, no decision on Kosovo's future should be taken without consulting and responding to the wishes of the people of Kosovo. There can be no exception or special exemptions to the application of the principle of self-determination. And, yes, we very much have Jammu and Kashmir in mind when we affirm this principle.

Secondly, it is unacceptable to establish any linkage between a resolution of the future political status of Kosovo and the goal endorsed by the international community: to preserve the territorial integrity of other States in the region.

Thirdly, the resolution of the status issue should be facilitated by a meaningful political dialogue between the leaders of Kosovo and the Government of Serbia. In that regard, we welcome the initiative by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to establish a dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina on practical matters of mutual concern. We support efforts to move that dialogue forward at the upcoming European Union Summit in Thessaloniki. We hope that the parties will soon develop sufficient confidence to constructively address as well the difficult political questions relating to the status of Kosovo in the near future.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): I should like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his comprehensive briefing.

My delegation welcomes the progress that has been achieved so far in Kosovo. However, we are also very concerned about the growing confrontational attitude in Kosovo towards the international community, and in particular against the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). That attitude is manifested, for example, by violations of the reserved powers of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, mostly by Kosovo Albanian politicians, as well as by the continued existence of illegal parallel structures within the Kosovo Serb communities in the northern parts of Kosovo.

We demand full respect for resolution 1244 (1999) by all sides, and we reject any attempts to question UNMIK's authority to administer Kosovo. We particularly condemn any attempts to force UNMIK into any kind of so-called co-governance, as well as any interference with the reserved powers of the Special Representative.

The question of Kosovo's final status will be addressed at the appropriate time and through the appropriate process. Only the Security Council has the power to assess the implementation of resolution 1244

(1999), and it has the final word in settling the status issue. No unilateral move or arrangement intended to predetermine Kosovo's status — either for the whole or for parts of Kosovo — can be accepted.

Germany expects the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo to meet the benchmarks set by the Special Representative, by advancing legislation and developing policies for all Kosovans in order to promote the economy and the development of the social system. We therefore urge the Kosovo leadership to guarantee minority rights, particularly the right of freedom of movement. In Kosovo, an environment must now be created both through legislative and administrative acts and through public awareness campaigns — an environment conducive to the sustainable return of minority refugees and internally displaced persons.

Like other delegations, we were shocked by the news of the brutal murder of a Kosovo Serb family on 4 June. The German Government strongly condemns those acts of violence. As I have stated in previous meetings of the Council, no act of violence or atrocity committed against the Kosovo Albanian population in the past can justify violence today. Any form of violent revenge or ethnic hatred is absolutely unacceptable. We welcome the immediate, strong condemnation of that act of barbarism by the Kosovo President and the Kosovo Assembly, and the fact that 6 June, last Friday, was designated a day of mourning in Kosovo. We believe that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has taken the appropriate steps, and we hope that the perpetrators will soon be brought to justice.

Germany supports the Special Representative in his efforts to transfer in a sustainable process non-reserved competencies from UNMIK to the Kosovo Institutions by the end of this year. That process of handing over responsibilities requires a further increase in capacity and determination on the part of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government. Only then will they be able to fulfil their new role in a responsible and accountable manner.

We support the efforts of the Council of Europe to present, as early as feasible, a strategy on decentralization in order to create the basis for multi-ethnic coexistence, with the aim of improving integration, participation and collective rights for all minorities, notably the Kosovo Serbs.

Germany supports the Special Representative in initiating a trilateral direct dialogue at the expert level with Belgrade and Pristina as early as feasible. That dialogue should address technical, non-status-related issues with the aim of building confidence, normalizing relations and consolidating regional stability.

My delegation fully subscribes to the statement that Greece will make shortly on behalf of the European Union. We fully stand behind the European Union's intention to confirm, at its forthcoming summit with South-Eastern European countries in Thessaloniki on 21 June, the European perspective for the Balkan region. Kosovo is part of that process.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening the present meeting and to express our appreciation to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for the valuable information he has just given us.

The periodic consideration of the situation in Kosovo reflects the concern and steadfast determination of our Council in following through on the actions taken in the framework of implementing resolution 1244 (1999).

At preceding meetings, my delegation welcomed the progress achieved on the ground and expressed its concern at the obstacles to be overcome. It remains a fact that institutional, security and economic issues, as well as those of returns and property, are still a source of concern for the international community in general and the Council in particular. We welcome the progress achieved in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) with a view to finding a suitable solution for the various issues.

However, my delegation notes with regret that the security situation remains a concern. In that context, it regrets the death of members of the Stolic family in Obilic. That situation can only fuel tensions, which undermine the efforts being made, particularly efforts to assist refugees and displaced persons, who require a certain level of security and confidence to return to their homes. We are hopeful that the measures taken by Mr. Steiner will quickly lead to the arrest and bringing to justice of the perpetrators of those heinous crimes.

Economic issues such as investment are also a source of great concern. My delegation believes that the success of the entire programme in Kosovo hinges

upon taking into account the interests of all Kosovans and on regional equilibrium. We note with satisfaction the holding of last month's Ohrid conference, where members of the Governments of Balkan region countries assembled to strengthen regional cooperation.

The leaders of the Provisional Institutions and local leaders, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the Belgrade authorities must further strengthen their cooperation in order to overcome the challenges for the future of a multi-ethnic Kosovo in a viable socio-economic, political and cultural environment.

Furthermore, my delegation notes with satisfaction the return last month of 800 bodies exhumed in Serbia, thought to be those of Kosovars of Albanian origin who had disappeared. It appreciates the work done by the UNMIK Office on Missing Persons and Forensics, as well as the activities of the Contact Group on Missing Persons of the United Nations Civilian Police and the Serb Government. That work must continue for the definitive settlement of this question.

Finally, my delegation is convinced that the establishment of lasting peace in Kosovo depends on the continued commitment of the leadership, of civil society and of the entire population to put their differences and futile disputes aside and to focus on promoting shared interests that can help everyone flourish. The contribution of the international community will always be indispensable to those efforts.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I will now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

As all other Council members have stated, we are grateful to Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi, for his thorough briefing on developments in Kosovo and in Serbia and Montenegro. As noted, today is the fourth anniversary of the adoption in this Chamber of resolution 1244 (1999), which set the principles and parameters for a settlement in Kosovo. There is no doubt that, since then, huge efforts have gone into reaching a settlement, and considerable progress has been made. Mr. Annabi and Council members spoke about that today.

However, they also emphasized that the problem is far from resolved. Problems outnumber solutions. The main conclusion today is that, four years after the deployment of special missions to the area, local citizens continue to lack equal conditions of security and freedom of movement. There is ongoing ethnically motivated violence, oppression and discrimination against minorities, particularly the Serb minority. The most flagrant example, though by no means the only one, was the brutal murder on 4 June of a Serbian family — an 80-year-old couple and their son — in Obilic. The Security Council has vigorously condemned that crime and has supported the effort of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to arrest the culprits and bring them to justice.

Moreover, it is clear that we need to do more than ensure that all such crimes are punished. We must double and treble the efforts of the international presences to fundamentally alter the entire atmosphere in the region, where there are still extremist forces creating a breeding ground for continued violence. International legal defence organizations — particularly Amnesty International in its 2003 report — have noted serious violations of minority rights in the region.

The idea of building a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo is bogged down and the level of trust between the Kosovan communities is in fact back to square one. The leaders of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government frequently shirk their obligations under resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework. Moreover, they are attempting to promote decisions that incite ethnic hatred. Among these is the Regional Assembly resolution on the "war values" of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the draft legislation on the census, which, if adopted, could be used for the arbitrary redrawing of the ethnic map of Kosovo. Such actions are being undertaken in spite of the clearly articulated negative position taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and as a challenge to the United Nations and the Security Council.

Without radical improvement of the situation in that regard, we cannot expect the full participation of minority representatives in the work of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government and in disbanding parallel structures. Our common challenge is to promote normal conditions for the constructive

participation of all Kosovan communities in the work of regional and municipal bodies.

We are concerned by the maintenance of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) as a paramilitary successor of the KLA. Ignoring decisions of the Security Council, the KPC leadership is blatantly trying to turn the Corps into an army for an independent Kosovo. I am not even referring to the commission of terrorist acts by Corps members, such as the sabotage of a bridge in Svecan, which was also referred to today.

Unfortunately, the reaction of the UNMIK leadership was confined to placing a one-month travel ban on Corps workers abroad, which has already ended. We are convinced that, in its current guise, the KPC is a potential source of destabilization in the region, capable of inciting a new wave of violence on multi-ethnic soil. We call on UNMIK to take a more active and consistent position in countering the growth of radical movements in the region and the assertion of their legitimacy.

Due to the lack of progress in those areas, there is also a serious impediment to establishing a dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. We support the concept of "standards before status". The process of transferring some competencies to the Provisional Institutions must be constructed strictly in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) and must move forward at a pace that is, above all, determined by the effectiveness of the work of those bodies in areas in which they have received all necessary competencies. The international presences must strengthen their oversight of this process, and must not allow abuses or attempts to use the Provisional Institutions for political purposes and turn Kosovo into a quasi-State structure. The process of the transfer of competencies can in no way be a substitute for a fundamental decision in principle on the status of the region, which must be taken at a later stage and exclusively on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999).

We deeply regret the serious interruptions in dialogue between UNMIK and the Belgrade authorities. We believe it is necessary to take urgent steps to restore constructive cooperation between them, which will enable us to avert collisions, such as the one that came about on the head of UNMIK's regulation on land-use rights. We have a serious concern about that regulation. It could have consequences that are too far-reaching. This is too serious a matter for us to take a decision that will last 99 years.

I share the view expressed by the representative of Mexico: we would expect that the assessments given by Council members today will be borne in mind by the UNMIK leadership in Kosovo in their continuing efforts for the full and comprehensive implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Serbia and Montenegro. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Šahović (Serbia and Montenegro): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor in the Council this month, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for the month of June. I also wish to thank you for convening this meeting today. I thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing.

Exactly four years ago, the Security Council passed resolution 1244 (1999) to chart the way to durable peace in Kosovo and Metohija. At the time, a future without the fear of persecution was envisaged through the establishment of a multi-ethnic, democratic and lawful society, in which the civil, political and human rights of all would be ensured. While confirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — whose name has been changed to Serbia and Montenegro — the resolution aimed at preventing new conflicts, creating a secure environment for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, demilitarizing the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and establishing substantial autonomy and self-government. What has been achieved?

There is peace in Kosovo and Metohija, if peace can be defined solely as the absence of war. However, security exists selectively, that is to say, for the majority but not for minorities. Again, freedom of movement is the privilege of the majority alone. The fate of more than 1,000 missing Serbs has not yet been resolved. There is little stability to speak of. Almost a quarter of a million internally displaced persons from minority communities — primarily Serbs who fled the province at the time of the arrival of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR — cannot return home.

Although a senior official from the Provisional Institutions of Kosovo and Metohija recently attempted to explain that failure by citing high unemployment rates, facts point in a different direction. A gruesome example of the real cause for the absence of returns was the bludgeoning to death of two 80-year-olds and their son in the town of Obilic on 4 June. They were natives of Obilic who had placed their trust in the international administrators of the province to ensure their safety.

My Government acknowledges the many expressions of condemnation and outrage that this atrocity has generated. We especially appreciate the Security Council's quick reaction to this gruesome crime. We also take note of the fact that, in stark contrast with previous murders of minority members, a special police squad to investigate the killing has been established and a cash reward is being offered for information leading to the perpetrators.

It has been stated within the Council and outside it that acts such as the Stolic murder are directed against returns, against ethnic reconciliation and against the creation of a multi-ethnic society. That is true. However, given the fact that all forms of violence against minorities, including terrorist attacks, have thus far garnered only verbal condemnation, it is unclear what arguments could be offered to 18 Serb families in Obilic to convince them to reconsider their decision to leave the town forever. Whose ultimate victory will that be?

Security, of course, cannot be achieved by words. The fact is that the perpetrators of that atrocity have not been identified, much less brought to justice. It is also a fact that the investigation of the 17 May murder in Vitina of mathematics professor Zoran Markovic has not made any progress that we are aware of. The same is true of the case of 90-year-old Slavko Stamenkovic, who was brutally beaten in his home in Vitina on 21 May, and of the 6 May stoning of a bus driving Serb children near Mitrovica.

If the perpetrators are not speedily brought to justice now — as they have not been in previous cases of inter-ethnic murder since 1999 — the Obilic killing will serve to strengthen the culture of impunity surrounding the violence against minorities. It will also provide further evidence that minorities, and Serbs in particular, do not enjoy the basic human right to life, let alone any other right. We therefore call on the Security Council to see to it that UNMIK, in accordance with its responsibilities defined four years ago, ensures that violence is not yet again confirmed as a legitimate political means in Kosovo and Metohija. Without that outcome, the latest atrocity will be a further setback in creating sufficient confidence to initiate the dialogue on practical issues, whose establishment my Government has consistently supported and called for. Pristina has thus far rejected every initiative in that regard.

As we are all aware, UNMIK has its own list of achievements in connection with implementing resolution 1244 (1999). The wave of Kosovo Albanian refugees in 1999 was reversed very quickly. Elections were held and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government were established, which led to the increasing transfer of responsibilities to local authorities. However, those Institutions have proven to be more efficient at insisting on their right to decide on foreign policy and defence matters and on ignoring minority rights — as witnessed by the law on higher education — on pressuring for independence, and — as in the most recent Assembly resolution, which called for regulating "the status of the fighters for the freedom and independence of Kosovo" — at creating ethnic division.

As part of that trend, the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), which has been officially designated as a civilian emergency organization, has retained and enhanced its military capacities. It is engaged in tireless efforts to preserve itself as the future army of an independent Kosovo. The activities of Albanian National Army (ANA) terrorists within the KPC in connection with the 12 April railway attack in northern Kosovo and Metohija have been confirmed beyond a shadow of a doubt. UNMIK and KFOR demands for data regarding the presence of the ANA within the KPC were met by a very characteristic response from the commander of the Corps, who said that, under his limited powers, he could offer no more information. We fully expect prompt and visible results from the international special investigative civil board formed on 2 June to investigate current and future members of the KPC who may be involved in proscribed organizations or activities.

In such overall conditions, UNMIK developed a strategy based on the principle of "standards before status", defining eight basic criteria for assessing progress in achieving the standards. In each of those

eight areas — for example, in the area of the rule of law — substantive achievements are almost negligible, yet UNMIK is speedily and systematically continuing to transfer responsibilities to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.

We consider it absolutely necessary to make the benchmarks operational, in line with repeated requests made by members of the Security Council. If the aim is truly to establish institutions functioning according to basic principles of democracy, the transfer process should be firmly conditioned on the capacities of the Institutions to responsibly exercise the authority entrusted to them for the benefit of all communities in the province.

With regard to the benchmarks, UNMIK itself is actually not contributing to their implementation in some cases. A stated UNMIK benchmark dealing with property rights requires that all property — including land, enterprises and other publicly owned assets — will have a clear and rightful owner. UNMIK regulation 2003/13 is clearly not a step towards fulfilling that benchmark. Rather, it creates additional confusion. By promulgating regulation 2003/13, on land use, UNMIK has in fact taken steps that exceed the authority conferred upon it by the Security Council. The regulation creates consequences of a structural and permanent character. A 99-year land lease is brushed away as a temporary measure that does not merit consultation with the owners of the land. That disregards the basic fact that the measure will by far exceed the term of the United Nations Administration itself. We are speaking here of a permanent transfer of publicly owned property and, to a large extent, the property of the Republic of Serbia. The regulation will also jeopardize the return of property nationalized after the Second World War to their rightful owners.

On 16 May, we requested an explanation of the legal basis for that regulation from the Legal Counsel of the United Nations. To date we have received no response. My Government is looking forward to the Counsel's response in order to decide on a further course of action with regard to this issue. In any event, our firm view is that the term of the lease for the land in question cannot exceed UNMIK's term of existence.

As stated by Foreign Minister Svilanović in a letter dated 20 May to the President of the Security Council, it is the position of my Government that the need for privatization in Kosovo and Metohija is undisputable. The method of establishing a privatization model without the participation of the Republic of Serbia as the largest creditor is, however, highly disputable. According to the Kosovo Trust Agency model, the burden of privatization — primarily a sovereign debt of close to $1.5 billion — first falls squarely upon the budget of Serbia and Serbian creditor companies or owners of soon-to-be privatized businesses in Kosovo and Metohija, then on Serbian guarantor banks and, finally, on workers who are currently displaced. Among other obvious consequences, that model is certain to adversely affect the return of internally displaced persons. However, nothing but the loss of life is irreversible. We expect that those legitimate concerns will be addressed prior to the full implementation of the process of privatization. We stand ready to further discuss these issues with UNMIK.

My country has fully complied with resolution 1244 (1999). In the last two and a half years we have consistently demonstrated the political will to constructively participate in its implementation, as evidenced by our support for the electoral processes in 2001 and 2002 and our active participation in formulating the November 2001 common document on cooperation with UNMIK. However, to a great extent, efforts to cooperate with UNMIK have been a one-way process. We expect channels of cooperation to be re-established in the near future. A constructive policy of transparency by UNMIK — including in the privatization process — will be a necessary new element in future communications between our Government and UNMIK.

There seems to be common agreement that the work in Kosovo and Metohija is far from done. Stability and prosperity are our shared goals. However, as the Secretary-General stated on the occasion of the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999), what counts is not only the commitment to peace, but also the will to implement it. I can assure the Security Council of my country's willingness to participate constructively in this process.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Serbia and Montenegro for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Greece. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): At the outset, since this is the first time that we are speaking under your presidency, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of your duties. I should also like to congratulate the previous President, the representative of Pakistan, on his excellent work.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries belonging to the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway declare that they align themselves with this statement.

We welcome Assistant Secretary-General Annabi's briefing on the situation in Kosovo. We should like to stress that the continuous and unabated interest and involvement of the international community — especially through the Security Council — is of paramount importance if that area is to finally achieve peace, stability and prosperity.

On this fourth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), let me reiterate that full implementation of that resolution remains the cornerstone of the European Union's policy on Kosovo. Building a democratic, multi-ethnic and multicultural Kosovo with full respect for the rule of law and for human and minority rights is our stated course of action. The "standards before status" policy provides the agreed framework for achieving those objectives.

Terrorism and violence — be they ethnically, politically or criminally motivated — will not be tolerated. We unequivocally condemn incidents such as the recent killing of two 80-year-old Kosovar Serbs and their son in the village of Obilic. We welcome the condemnation by all parties in Kosovo of that act of violence, as well as Prime Minister Rexhepi's visit to Obilic. We expect all parties to do their utmost to ensure that the perpetrators are soon brought to justice.

A Kosovo where members of minority communities are oppressed will face a bleak future of self-imposed isolation. Our efforts should aim to establish appropriate security, economic and legislative conditions that will allow minorities to be — as they should be — an integral part of Kosovo's political, economic, social and cultural life, while making the return of refugees feasible and sustainable.

Organized crime is the single most urgent challenge that we must address in the region. Coupled with extremism, and with deep roots in the area's political and social life, organized crime threatens the very foundation of the principles and values that we are trying to instil in the new institutions formed there, thus rendering our efforts fruitless.

Political stability in Kosovo requires the building of stable institutions through the establishment and strengthening of local democracy. We fully support the process of transfer of competencies to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, as set out in chapter 5 of the Constitutional Framework, and taking into account the capacity of those institutions to handle them. Building effective, transparent and accountable institutions for the benefit of all communities, while adhering to the obligations arising from Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework, and not prejudging the final status should be our main objectives.

The European Union is strongly committed to securing peace, security and the right conditions for political and economic development in the region by enhancing its European perspective through the Stabilization and Association Process. The Thessaloniki Summit, to be held on 21 June, will focus on precisely that European perspective, which is aimed at promoting both regional ownership and regional cooperation, including dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Greece for the kind words he addressed to me.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annabi to respond to comments and questions raised.

Mr. Annabi: There were two specific questions from our colleague from the United Kingdom. The first question related to the issue of parallel structures. As I indicated in my briefing, parallel structures offering administrative and other services to Kosovo Serb residents continue to operate in certain parts of Kosovo with the support of Belgrade. Efforts to strengthen the institutional links between Belgrade and those parallel structures in Kosovo have been most evident in the areas of health and education.

Although Belgrade has agreed that the parallel structures should be disbanded, there continue to be

areas — mostly in northern Kosovo — which, for example, still have parallel courts, even if those courts play only a marginal role. Nevertheless, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been able to establish a minor offences court and a municipal court in the municipality of Zubin Potok, in the Mitrovica area.

In Mitrovica itself, UNMIK continues to provide the Kosovo Serbs in the north of the city with a number of administrative services. As I indicated in my briefing, Mr. Steiner has also appointed a multi-ethnic advisory board that is intended to act as a forum for cooperation among the communities. The board's first meeting was held on 13 May. The Kosovo Serbs participated, but they then expressed reservations about the board's composition, wrongly claiming that there had been some kind of understanding that it would include only Kosovo Serb members.

UNMIK is in the process of developing a comprehensive action plan and policy to address this problem of parallel structures, and Belgrade's cooperation will, of course, be essential in that process.

The second question related to UNMIK's downsizing and to how, in that context, the Mission intends to proceed with the shift from executive to advisory functions as it transfers chapter 5 responsibilities to the Provisional Institutions.

UNMIK's downsizing plans, of course, have to be seen in the context of its budget, which has been established at the level of $315 million for the fiscal year beginning on 1 July this year. That planning is being developed in a manner which will ensure that, as powers are transferred, UNMIK retains an overall capacity in all areas to effectively discharge or exercise its authority under resolution 1244 (1999) and to discharge its powers and responsibilities, including those in the Constitutional Framework.

As UNMIK gradually transfers the non-reserved competencies listed in chapter 5 of the Constitutional Framework to the Provisional Institutions, it will retain sufficient staff to have the capacity to monitor and advise the Provisional Institutions and municipalities, as well as to intervene whenever that becomes necessary, to ensure that those bodies exercise their responsibilities in compliance with resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework.

UNMIK also takes into account in its planning the fact that at a later stage there will be increased involvement on the part of the Provisional Institutions and the people of Kosovo in the administrative and operational functions in specific reserved areas identified in chapter 8 of the Constitutional Framework. This process will naturally involve a reallocation and reduction, in some cases, of UNMIK's resources from the transferred areas to the reserved areas, in line with UNMIK's budget.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Annabi for his clarifications.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.